FOREWORD

With the exception of the tragedy of the Jews during the Third Reich, there is hardly any other topic that stirs the emotions as much as that of treason during the Second World War.

Some believe that this treason during the war was decisive for the war and was the main reason for the defeat in 1945, while others deliberately play down the effects of the monstrous treason and trivialize its horrific consequences.

As is usually the case, the truth lies somewhere in the middle. In any case, the fact is that this treason certainly contributed significantly to the defeat and certainly cost the lives of many hundreds of thousands of German soldiers.

The three major known traitor groups were:

The Red Orchestra, led by First Lieutenant of the Luftwaffe Harro Schulze-Boysen, who, together with his associates, radioed over 500 treason reports to Colonel General Kusnetzow in Moscow after the outbreak of the Eastern campaign about tactical plans of the German Wehrmacht, troop deployments, armaments, supply transports and attack dates. The employees were aristocrats, officers, intellectuals, men and women. It was not until December 22, 1942 that 41 of the 68 accused were executed after the group was exposed. The rest received prison sentences.

The second, probably even more "successful" group of traitors was the Red Three in Switzerland, led by the Catholic emigrant Rudolf Rössler. They obtained their information directly from the German General Staff and from the Swiss Abwehr, which was highly active in the espionage war against Germany. The Red Three betrayed practically everything that was decided and planned in the Führer's headquarters, the OKH and OKW. Through them, the Soviet General Staff was practically sitting in on the most secret meetings at the Führer's headquarters and could therefore always easily thwart German actions.

The third group, which was probably decisive for the war, was called "Millet" and was based in the German embassy in Tokyo, whose ambassador Ott had made the Soviet agent Dr. Richard Sorge his confidant. The Soviets received all instructions from the Reich Foreign Ministry through Sorge. He forwarded his radio messages to General Beldin in Moscow.

Moscow. Sorge's decisive message, however, came from a Japanese source. In the second half of October 1941, Sorge learned that the Japanese General Staff had finally dropped the plan requested by the Germans to attack the Soviet Union from the east and had instead decided to attack the British in Singapore and the Americans in the Pacific.

Stalin immediately had the two million Red Army soldiers of the Far East Army thrown to the West in express transports. Rested and well-equipped, they arrived on the faltering fronts of Leningrad, Moscow and Rostov just as the exhausted German soldiers were about to launch their final attack. The traitor Sorge had thus decided the Eastern campaign of 1941; the period of shock for the Soviets was over. The Japanese, not the Germans, finally exposed and executed Dr. Sorge.

The activities of these three agent groups alone: Rote Kapelle, Rote Drei and Gruppe Hirse makes it almost unbelievable that, thanks to the bravery of the German soldiers and officers, they still managed to withstand and almost defeat the overpowering enemy for almost five years. In all three groups of agents, which were financed by Moscow and worked for the High Command of the Red Army, the anti-national socialist attitude played a decisive role in their origins.

As monstrous as these facts are, in the end they are small compared to the guilt of the treason that contributed decisively to the outbreak of war against Germany, which was still completely inadequately equipped both militarily and economically, long before the war. This group of traitors, known as the Black Orchestra, worked almost exclusively for the Western Allies, even if there were some attempts to forge links with Moscow. The Black Orchestra certainly played a decisive role in the war, both in triggering the outbreak of war and in the course of the fighting through ongoing betrayal. These traitors worked in two directions: The one who deliberately provoked the outbreak of war for ideological reasons, the other who ruthlessly sacrificed the lives of German soldiers during the war itself in order to be able to overthrow the Nazi system via a military defeat. One of the conspirators, Fabian von Schlabrendorff, admits without batting an eyelid: "Our most urgent task was to prevent Hitler's success under all circumstances and by all means, even at the cost of a severe defeat for the Third Reich." (Fabian von Schlabrendorff, "Officer against Hitler", page 38.)

The traitors of the Black Orchestra all came from the Zossen General Staff and comprised about 30 high-ranking officers, mainly generals. But lest there be any confusion here: these traitors

formed a small, almost vanishing minority. Tragically, they found themselves in positions of great insight and influence in the various general staffs and in the Führer's headquarters. The by no means pro-German French historian Raymond Cartier confirms: "From the very beginning, there was a spirit of conspiracy in the higher command posts and among the senior officers." (Raymond Cartier, "The Second World War", page 22.)

In contrast to them, the mass of German generals fulfilled their military duty as faithfully as any German soldier. In front of the enemy, 936 field marshals and generals fell or died in captivity or chose suicide to avoid falling into the hands of the enemy, or were executed. Of the army 776, of the air force 113, of the navy 73, of the Waffen-SS 63 and of the police 39 (Josef Foltmann, "Opfergang der Generale").

They, and not the small group of dutiful opponents of the regime, actually represented the German generals in the Second World War.

In addition to the military traitors, the Black Orchestra included diplomats, politicians and a conspicuous number of members of the aristocracy and capital.

Many years ago, when I dealt with all these groups of agents and traitors in my documentaries "Betrayal of Germany" and "How Germany was betrayed", I was met with disbelief in some quarters. In the meantime, these facts have become part of our tragic history. Karl Balzer's stirring documentaries "The 20th of July and Treason" and "Sabotage against Germany" are commendable in that they clearly show the decisive limits of high treason against the Hitler government and those of criminal treason. In principle, high treason is not dishonorable, even if the meaning of its activity during a war is debatable. But a high traitor with character will never stoop to treason.

And yet it is a sad fact on record: long before the outbreak of war, German traitors were literally queuing up at the doors of British politicians in London to convey to them the alleged or real plans of the Reich government. They were so eagerly at work that the biographer of the German resistance, Gerhard Ritter, stated matter-of-factly: "In the course of the summer of 1939, a whole series of messengers from the opposition arrived in London." (Gerhard Ritter, "Carl Goerdeler and the German Resistance Movement", page 229).

The traitors to the country, as confirmed by the now published British secret files, were among others: Carl Goerdeler, Ewald von Kleist-Schmenzin, the brothers Erich and Theo Kordt and others.
They all came with the knowledge of General Beck, Admiral Canaris and his Ob I Oster.

After Winston Churchill was chosen by the anti-German forces of the world on December 3, 1936 in London's Albert Hall as the figurehead who was to prepare the war against Germany, he too was literally overrun by the German traitors. The objective German historian Dietrich Aigner writes in his Churchill memoirs: "Another source of information for the intelligence center supervised by Lindemann and Charwell were members of the German resistance, who - like Ewald von Kleist-

Schmenzin or Carl- Friedrich Go ' erdeler - were referred to Churchill through intermediaries and wanted to see in him an ally in the fight against Hitler. However, they were only valued as suppliers of news. Goederler", wrote Sir Robert Vansittart on December 7, 1938, was "a front man for the German military expansionists . . . not only worthless, but also dangerous in his role as a negotiator" - but useful as a source of news. It was not without effect that Churchill and his friends used their German resistance contacts against the Chamberlain government as key witnesses for Hitler's intentions to attack - in 1939 also with the intention of making Hitler's Germany's moral resistance appear as weak as possible." (Dietrich Aigner, "Winston Churchill", page 109.)

Dr. Peter Kleist had already pointed this out in his 1961 documentary "The European Tragedy":

"We know today that representatives of the German resistance were also at work in Paris and London to persuade both states to adopt a strong stance towards Berlin. Among others, it was the Kordt brothers and a Mr. von Kleist-Schmenzin who used their British connections to encourage the London government in its intransigence. They were clearly at odds with London Ambassador von Dirksen, who neither overestimated the strength of the German resistance nor underestimated Hitler's determination and who therefore tried to persuade the British government to exert a moderating influence on Poland.

The fact that these secret developments supported the British politicians in their decision to go to war is confirmed by British Prime Minister Chamberlain in his diary entry of September 10, 1939: "What I hope for is not military victory - I doubt very much whether it is possible - but a collapse of the German internal front." (Quoted in Keith Feiling, "The Life of Neville Chamberlain", page 418)." (Peter Kleist, "The European Tragedy", Göttingen 1961, page 104.)

The final proof of this criminal incitement of the Al

The final proof of this criminal incitement of the Allies by the traitors to the country was provided by the now published British secret documents on the years 1938/39, which Mrs. Annelies von Ribbentrop published in her sensational documentation "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes".

The effect this misinformation had on British and French politicians is demonstrated by the French Chief of Staff Gamelin, who declared in August 1939: "Let me tell you something that may surprise you: whether the 'Wehrmacht has ten, twenty or a hundred divisions is quite indifferent, because if we are forced to go to war against Germany, I will probably never have to deal with the German army... It's quite simple: the day war is declared on Germany, Hitler will fall. Instead of defending the borders of the Reich, the German army will have to march on Berlin to quell the unrest that will break out there. The troops in the West Wall will offer little resistance. We will push into the German Reich like butter." 0 Benoist-Mechin, "Did Adolf Hitler want war?", page 347).

It is certain, not only from uncontradicted publications, but from amdich Allied documents, that the traitors of the Black Orchestra bear at least the same guilt for

the outbreak of the terrible Second World War as those international forces that stood behind Churchill's "focus" from 1936 onwards. Not only did they encourage England, France and the USA to take an anti-German stance, but their false information, which contained only their pipe dreams but no realities, contributed significantly to the early war that was so disastrous for Germany. If the Allied politicians had not believed these criminal fantasies, but the factual reports of the British Ambassador Henderson (Berlin) and the American Ambassador Kennedy (London), the irresponsible, worthless guarantee for Poland and thus the state of war would not have come about at all.

There was a reason why the conspirators' unrealistic pipe dreams were taken seriously by the decisive Allied politicians. The warmongers, above all Churchill and Roosevelt, who had long been eagerly awaiting the right opportunity to declare war on Germany, clung to this false information from the German traitors because it fitted in perfectly with their plans. "Germany must be defeated again, and this time for good", Churchill had already declared to Heinrich Brüning in September 1934. (Dietrich Aigner, page 103.)

In 1936 Churchill said to the British War Minister DuffCooper: "There is only one remedy against the German danger; the division of the Reich that was neglected at Versailles." (Dietrich Aigner, "Winston Churchill", page 103.)

Frighteningly, the same willingness to destroy prevailed on the part of the German traitors. Dr. Goerdeler explained to the British diplomat Ashton-Gwatkin: "The only chance to separate Hitler and the army would be to involve Germany and Italy in a war." (Annelies von Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 280.)

The German traitors knew that they would never get a chance without war, which is why they deliberately incited the Western Allies to wage war against Germany, because this was the only chance, as Goerdeler freely admitted, albeit at the expense of the Reich, as Schlabrendorff confirmed, to overthrow the hated Reich government.

This spooky and criminal activity finally bore fruit. The war had arrived. Now the traitors threw off the last of their camouflage. They revealed attack dates, tactical plans and much more to the Allies.

In the following documentary, Karl Balzer has carefully researched this disastrous activity of the conspirators before and during the war and has provided evidence that the traitors contributed decisively to Germany's military defeat in the Second World War.

Beyond these truly shocking facts, however, the conspirators committed another irreparable crime: They destroyed the concept of loyalty and that of unconditional fulfillment of duty that had been immutable among the German people up to that era. And they put an end to the sanctity of the oath; they reduced to absurdity the model of impeccable Prussianism that had shone for centuries.

And they accomplished something else monstrous. They turned treason, even treason against their own fighting comrades, into a kind of trivial offense. This

made it possible for a Soviet agent, Herbert Richard Wehner, who had been sentenced to a year in prison in a neutral foreign country for espionage and sabotage against Germany, to rise to become a leading politician in the Federal Republic. The fact that Wehner was fired by the Communists "for proven denunciation, for negligent and party-damaging behavior" as a result of his position in Swedish prison is no exoneration of his espionage activities for Moscow during the war against Germany.

No one can therefore be surprised if there are no longer any inhibitions about treason in the rest of Germany. It was also entirely in line with this development that the traitor of Peenemünde, Dr. Otto John (Hans Frederik, "Das Ende einer Legende", Munich 1971, page 61), became the first protector of the West German state.

protector of the West German state. As President of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, he then defected to East Berlin and acted as a key witness for the Red Wall murderers against the Federal Republic of Germany. He then returned home via Moscow as the "double whammy of treason" and was astonished that he was removed from his post and imprisoned.

In 1954, John opened an almost endless line of traitors: from the SPD member of the Bundestag Alfred Frenzei (1960), the head of anti-Soviet counter-intelligence at the Federal Intelligence Service, Heinz Felfe (1961), Heinz Sütterlin (1970), Günther Guillaume (1974), to name but a few of the "celebrities" of the traitors of everyday German-German life.

They are all the spiritual children and grandchildren of yesterday's traitors and conspirators. Like them, they also refer to their political opposition; this time to democracy in the Federal Republic of Germany.

In his new publication, the courageous Karl Balzer has now revealed the extent of the conspiracy against Germany, which is still largely unknown today, and at the same time has undertaken a fascinating analysis of the betrayal. Now the painstakingly polished varnish is off. Things are now as they were, not as they were falsified or even glorified in retrospect.

Balzer's latest book complements his previous documentations in an excellent way and rounds off the show about the conspiracy against Germany, of which the former traitor, Dr. Eugen Gerstenmaier, had the courage to admit: "What we in the German resistance did not really want to understand during the war, we learned in retrospect: that this war was ultimately not waged against Hitler, but against Germany." ("Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung", March 21, 1975.)

If this profound realization had already prevailed in the 1930s, there would have been no treason - except for the open enemy agents - no conspiracy against Germany, perhaps no war at all. At least no war against Germany, which at the time was completely under-equipped militarily and economically.

Karl Balzer's book, which is certainly systematically hushed up by the officials, helps to understand much of what a whole generation suffered and whose consequences will continue to weigh heavily on future German generations.

Erich Kern

THE VARIOUS RESISTANCE GROUPS AND THEIR MOTIVES

The Catholic resistance

The first hostile public attitude towards Hitler after he came to power came on February 10, 1933 from the Catholic Church through the Cardinal of Munich-Freising, Dr. Michael Faulhaber, who, in view of the upcoming Reichstag elections on March 5, 1933, stated in a pastoral letter on civic conscience, among other things:

"In all forms of government, the authority of the state is ordained by God. Even if a Pilate or a Nero sits on the throne. There is no authority except from God, and that which exists is ordained by God. A ray of God's authority therefore shines above all state thrones. Even the most terrible power, the power to condemn to death or to pardon, is given by God. The sentence in the first article of the Constitution of the German Reich: 'The power of the state emanates from the people' is a false doctrine, a falsification of the biblical sentence: 'There is no power except from God.1"

On February 15, 1933, Hitler gave the following answer to the Center, the party of Catholics, at an election meeting in Stuttgart:

"It astonishes me that a representative of the Center speaks to us of freedom. Has not our movement been subjected to an unheard-of chain of oppression and gagging for 13 years by those who speak to us like this today? Was it freedom that our movement was punished and suppressed because of its national will? That its fighters were thrown into prison, that our SA men were stripped of their shirts, that our press was ruthlessly banned and everything we suffered during these 13 years was done? Those who did not talk about our freedom for 14 years have no right to talk about it today...

And if these parties say today that there has at least been a gradual improvement, it is not because they were there, but because this young movement had come into being. If a people in Geneva shows us sympathy today,

then it was us, not them, who initiated this development. Today they say that Christianity is in danger, that the Catholic faith is under threat. I have to reply to that: First of all, Germany is led by Christians, not international atheists. I am not talking about Christianity, but I confess that I will never associate myself with parties that want to destroy Christianity. For fourteen years they have walked arm in arm with atheism. Christianity has never suffered greater damage than when these Christian parties were in government with the deniers of God. Germany's entire cultural life was disrupted and contaminated during this time.

It will be our task to burn out these signs of decay in literature, in the theater, in schools and the press, in short in our entire culture, and to eliminate the poison that has flowed into our entire life during these fourteen years." (VB of February 17, 1933.)

The attitude of the Catholic Church after the takeover was ambivalent. However, it was immediately apparent that the majority of German bishops were openly willing to cooperate. In some cases, they emphasized this so loudly that the small anti-church circles within the NSDAP, especially the civilian SS, became nervous and tried to put the brakes on this new allegiance.

The Catholic historian Friedrich Heer reports very openly on this development in his works, especially in "God's First Love" in the chapter "Crushed between the Cross and the Swastika". The abundance of enthusiastic Catholic approval is impossible to list in this context. The examples given should suffice:

Prelate Kaas enthusiastically announced the Center's approval of the Enabling Act on March 23, 1933. The bishops lifted their ban and committed Catholics to positive cooperation in the Third Reich. Monsignor Föhr publicly welcomed the Führer's work on March 30, 1933. Archbishop Gröber of Freiburg joined the circle of supporters of the SS. On 3 April 1933, the Catholic organization "Cross and Eagle" was founded for cooperation with the NSDAP.

On April 26, 1933, Adolf Hitler received Bishop Wilhelm Berning and Monsignor Steinmann. All three were united in the fight against liberalism, socialism and Bolshevism. Berning assured Hitler that the bishops would "urge the faithful to obedience and reverence". The bishops, Berning explained, happily recognized "that Christianity would be promoted by the new state, morality would be elevated and the fight against Bolshevism and godlessness would be waged with energy and success". The two clerics did not contradict Hitler when he remarked that he was doing nothing against the Jews other than what the Church had done against them for 1500 years.

The Fulda Bishops' Conference, which met from May 30 to June 1, 1933, proclaimed: "For Catholics there is a deep continuity in their love of the fatherland, in their faith in authority, even towards the secular state." At the same time, the pastoral letter of the conference promoted the living space for the German nation and thanked the German government that unbelief, immorality and Bolshevism no longer threatened the German soul.

In Trier Cathedral, Bishop Bornewasser appealed to the Catholic youth: "With our heads held high and our steps firm, we have entered the new Reich and are prepared to serve it with all the strength of our body and soul.

On June 25, 1933, Adolf Hitler was solemnly invited to the Berlin Catholic Congress. However, he did not come, partly because the ingratiation obviously seemed too much for him and partly because parts of the NSDAP, especially the SS, were increasingly disconcerted by the Catholic Church's about-turn.

Adolf Hitler sought reconciliation with the Church because he did not want his cultural and economic development work to be disrupted. He therefore sought a concordat between the Vatican and the German Reich, which was concluded on July 20, 1933 and solemnly signed in Rome. "As far as the Catholic Church is concerned*' - as the conspiracy's advocate, Professor Hans Rothfels, explains in his book "The German Opposition to Hitler" - "by concluding the concordat, the Vatican initially attempted to continue a policy that had not been successful during the Weimar period, and at the same time to erect certain barriers against the claims of the totalitarian system and the spread of neo-paganism. For Hitler, these negotiations were about the possible elimination of the Center or any opposition on the part of the German clergy and about refuting the accusation of his own hostility to the Church for propaganda purposes. Vice-Chancellor von Papen (who led the negotiations with the Vatican and brought them to a successful conclusion, the author) telegraphed from Rome with exuberant words after the conclusion: 'Thanks to your generous and wise statesmanlike view of the important task of the Christian churches in the building of the Third Reich, a work has been completed which will later be recognized as a historic deed of National Socialism.*" (Hans Rothfels, "The German Opposition to Hitler", page 42.)

High representatives of the Catholic clergy such as the Abbot of Maria Laach, Ildefons Herwegen, O.S.B., and Bishop Graf Galen, Münster, were very happy about the conclusion of the Concordat; Archbishop Gröber, Freiburg, had even joined the SS circle of supporters and Bishop Berning,

Osnabrück, had accepted Göring's appointment as the new Prussian State Councillor.

After initialling the Concordat on July 8, 1933, Hitler issued the following decree:

"Through the conclusion of the Concordat between the Holy See and the German Reich government, it appears to me that sufficient guarantee has been given that the members of the Reich of the Roman Catholic confession will from now on place themselves unreservedly in the service of the new National Socialist state. I therefore order:

1. The dissolution of such Catholic organizations which are recognized by the present treaty and whose dissolution took place without instructions from the Reich Government is to be reversed immediately.

2. All coercive measures against clergymen and other leaders of these Catholic organizations are to be revoked. A repetition of such measures is inadmissible in the future and will be punished in accordance with the existing laws.

I am happy in the conviction that an epoch has now come to an end in which, unfortunately, religious and political interests have all too often become apparently irreconcilable.

The treaty concluded between the Reich and the Catholic Church will also serve to establish peace in this area, which is needed by all.

I have strong hopes that the settlement of the questions affecting the Protestant creed will soon bring this act of pacification to a happy conclusion." (VB of July 10, 1933.)

On July 24, 1933, Cardinal Faulhaber also swung into line. He addressed a hand-written letter to Hitler in which he stated: What the old parliaments and parties could not accomplish in 60 years, your statesmanlike foresight has achieved in six months, the Concordat. The letter ended: God preserve the Reich Chancellor for our people!

At the Holy Robe celebrations in Trier in August 1933, Vicar General Steinmann greeted the Catholic faithful with "Heil Hitler". When the New York "Aurora and Christian World" criticized this, Monsignor Steinmann replied in an open letter that appeared in the newspaper "Germania" on October 6, 1933, and wrote, among other things: German Catholics regard Hitler's government as a God-given authority, a bulwark against Bolshevism, it has destroyed Bolshevism, eradicated the atheist-Marxist movement and liberated the German people from the plague of a filthy literature.

During the Saar War in 1935, Bishops Bornewasser (Trier) and Sebastian (Speyer) declared their support for Germany. In June 1936, Bishop Berning visited several concentration camps in his diocese of Osnabrück. He exhorted the
prisoners in the Aschendorfer Moor to obedience and loyalty to the state and the people. On July 1, 1936, Bishop Berning bid farewell to the prisoners in the Papenburg concentration camp with a threefold "Sieg Heil" to the Führer. The

Catholic newspaper "Kölnische Volkszeitung" reported on this in detail. (Friedrich Heer, "God's first love", page 412.)

On November 4, 1936, there was a lengthy discussion between Hitler and Cardinal Faulhaber on the Obersalzberg, followed by lunch together. On December 24, 1936, a pastoral letter from the German bishops was published and read from all pulpits. "A fateful hour has struck. Bolshevism is on the advance against Europe."

At the turn of the year 1936, Archbishop Schulte of Cologne sent a telegram to Adolf Hitler in which he expressed "in deepest reverence God's constant protection and richest blessings". (Alois C. Hudal, "Römische Tagebücher", page 296.)

The great collaboration of the Catholic Church with Adolf Hitler and National Socialism was thus coming to an end. The rising differences did not arise because of religious problems or even obstruction of religious practice, but primarily in the question of youth education and schools. The Catholic Church laid claim to denominational schools and denominational youth associations - a claim that was incompatible with youth education and the state's educational program. Friction arose between pastors and HJ leaders at the lowest level, which continued up to the regional and Reich leadership of the HJ and the bishops. In addition, the Catholic Church was allergic to Alfred Rosenberg's "myth" and gave the few and uninfluential Germanic swarms an overvaluation that bore no relation to reality.

Pope Pius XI fueled the antagonism even more with his world circular "With burning concern" on March 14, 1937. The Pope qualified the strong evaluation of race, people and state as heresy and appealed in particular to Catholic youth, priests and religious to stand firm. All in all, a veritable declaration of war, which was read out from all pulpits in Germany on March 21, 1937.

At the same time, the Catholic Church outside Germany, alarmed by the Vatican, intervened in the emerging Kulturkampf. It took a very active part in the smear campaign against the new Germany. Cardinal George Mundelein, Archbishop of Chi i cago, gave an anti-German incendiary speech to 500 clerics in Quigley on May 18, 1937, in which he insulted Hitler as a "house painter" and above all denounced the curtailment of the Catholic Church's propaganda opportunities and the trials that were being held against Catholic religious for currency violations and crimes of immorality.
against Catholic religious. He unconcernedly claimed that every second person in the German Reich was a spy for the government. . (J. Neuhäusler, "Kreuz und Hakenkreuz II", page 13.)

While the petty war at the lower level became increasingly heated, various departments of the Hitler Youth in particular took up the gauntlet of the belligerent clergy and defended their ideological youth education, the Gestapo suppressed the anti-government agitation of various clergymen in accordance with the Treachery Act and arrested particularly active church resisters, Adolf Hitler himself stayed out of the whole completely undesirable dilemma.

Fritz Günther von Tschirschky, who spoke out in 1972 in his "Memoirs of a High Traitor", reports on the subject of the Concordat: "When Mr. von Papen,

during a conversation with Hitler about the fight against the Concordat begun by the National Socialist Party authorities, voiced his complaints, he took the opportunity to tell Hitler that great unrest had arisen in the Catholic public because of Alfred Rosenberg's book 'The Myth of the 20th Century'. Hitler replied: 'I don't understand that at all. . . If the Church didn't make such a fuss about the book, it would soon be forgotten and ignored by the general public.*" (Fritz Günther von Tschirschky, "Erinnerungen eines Hochverräters", page 108.)

In his work "Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich", Erich Kern comments on the same topic as follows: "The Catholic Church opposed the glorification of the nation and its history because it saw it as a threat to its mission. The pugnacious Cardinal Faulhaber even preached a sermon against Germanism during Advent. The fear of the rise of a free religious movement around Alfred Rosenberg and of the Hitler Youth, which was increasingly taking away the organizational ground from the church, was unmistakable."

Hitler was unsympathetic to this unfortunate development. After all, with the Concordat he had achieved something for the Catholic Church that it had been waiting for in vain for so long. He had obviously reckoned that the Church would adhere to the Bible saying: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's!" The empire had given to the church and could justifiably expect that, as a secular authority, it would now be given what was its own. In accordance with this Bible text, the Catholic bishops were bound by Article 16 of the Reich Concordat to be loyal to the German Reich. It reads: "Before the bishops take possession of their diocese, they shall swear an oath of allegiance to the Reich Governor in the relevant state or to the Reich President according to the following formula:

'Before God and on the Holy Gospels I swear and promise, as befits a bishop, to the German Reich and the country . . . Fidelity. I swear and promise to respect the constitutionally constituted government and to have it respected by my clergy. In my dutiful concern for the welfare and interests of the German state, I will, in the exercise of the clerical office entrusted to me, endeavor to prevent any harm that could threaten it.1" (Ludwig Volk, "Das Reichskonkordat vom 20. Juli 1933", page 238.)

This article with the oath formula was clearly outlined and did not require special implementing regulations like Article 31 of the Reich Concordat. Accordingly, various bishops would have had to exercise far more restraint in their pastoral letters and sermons in their disputes with state bodies.

Hitler's thoughts on the church dispute become clear in the record of his table talks. Under the date April 11, 1942, it is reported from the Wolf's Lair:

"At dinner, the chief emphasized that Rosenberg's 'Mythos1 could not be regarded as an official party work. He, the chief, had expressly refused at the time to give this book a party-papal character, since its title alone was misleading. For one could not say that one wanted to set the myth of the 20th century, as something mystical, against the spiritual views of the 19th century, but as a National Socialist

one had to say that one set the faith and knowledge of the 20th century against the myth of the 19th century.

It was remarkable that the main readership of Rosenberg's work was not to be found among the old party members. In the first period after publication, the greatest difficulties were encountered in selling the first edition. Only when the work was mentioned in a pastoral letter was it possible to get rid of the first 10,000 copies. Since Cardinal Faulhaber of Munich had been foolish enough to quote and attack the 'Myth' at a bishops' conference, he had made the second edition possible. When it was then placed on the index because it was accused of heresy by the party, the demand for the book increased further. And when the Catholic Church then published all the pamphlets against Rosenberg's ideas with all their rejoinders, the print run climbed to 17,000,000 and 200,000 respectively.

He, the boss, was always pleased when he had to realize that only our opponents really knew about the book. Like many Gauleiters, he had only read a small part of it, because in his opinion it was written in a way that was too difficult to understand." (Henry Picker, "Hitler's Table Talks", page 269 f.)

Max Domarus got to the heart of the matter when he stated: "Hitler absolutely did not feel like a religious reformer. He had already expressed this clearly in Mein Kampf. He was only interested in power. If the Christian churches in Germany renounced any claim to power in political and social terms and any influence on schools and youth organizations, then they could hold religious exercises in their places of worship as much as they wanted. He was even prepared to grant them the greatest financial support and hoped that they would actively support him in the national 'expansions' and wars. Above all, when he would go to war against godless Bolshevik Russia." (Max Domarus, "Hitler -Redenden und Proklamationen 1932-1945", Volume I, page 287).

But this was precisely what the Catholic Church did not want to do without: "neither the influence in the schools nor the youth organizations. This later gave rise to the so-called church struggle". (Erich Kern, "Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich", page 93 f.)

The dispute between the state and the Catholic Church could probably have been largely avoided if the Vatican had issued the implementing regulations agreed in Article 32 of the Reich Concordat of July 20, 1933. This article has the following wording:

"On the basis of the special circumstances existing in Germany and in view of the safeguards created by the provisions of the above Concordat for legislation safeguarding the rights and freedoms of the Catholic Church in the Reich and its lands, the Holy See shall issue provisions which exclude membership in political parties and activity for such parties on the part of clergymen and religious."

Despite Hitler's passive stance on the church question, propagandistic resistance grew among some of the clergy, especially among the Jesuits, which became effective in open sermons, but mostly in hidden form, for example in auricular confessions. The authorities were slow to take action.

The indictment against the Jesuit priest Anton Körbling from 1939 reveals what was going on in the pulpits of German churches. Father Körbling was accused of

1. Having made publicly inflammatory and spiteful statements about leading figures of the state and the NSDAP about their orders and the institutions they had created, which were likely to undermine the people's trust in the political leadership.

2. As a clergyman in the exercise of his profession in a church, having made several matters of the state the subject of discussion in a manner endangering public peace.

to have made them the subject of discussion." (J. Neuhäusler, "Kreuz und Hakenkreuz", page 55.)

The methods of resistance used by Catholic clergymen are highlighted in an SD report from the Aachen administrative district:

"The reserve of the Catholic clergy is steadily increasing . .

In response to the facts that the Catholic Church has meanwhile gone on the attack across the board, but has masterfully understood how to present its stance as a defense forced upon it by so-called neo-paganism and other allegedly anti-clerical efforts . . . as I pointed out in detail in my previous report . . .

The struggle of the Catholic Church against the so-called New Paganism, mostly combined with attacks also against the principles of National Socialism and thus of the new state, is taking on ever sharper forms . .

The opposing attitude of the Catholic clergy towards the state and the movement, which was constantly mentioned in my earlier situation reports, is increasingly moving from the stage of a wait-and-see passive behavior to that of an offensive. ... .

Of course, the clergy is careful not to portray the state or its organs as the aggressor. However, the double meaning of the sermons immediately shows any insider what is being aimed at and that every effort is being made to discredit the world view of National Socialism in any way. . ." (Kurt Zentner, "Illustrated History of Resistance in Germany and Europe 1939-1945", page 114).

In practice, the Catholic resisters mainly misused the means of religious education for political purposes, especially preaching, confessionals, religious instruction, religious instruction and pastoral home visits. In the SD report mentioned above, a range of these overt and covert tactics is given. Church resistance was massively directed against the National Socialist world view: "against racial ideology, against anti-Semitism, against the Führer principle ('glorification of mankind1), against national I socialist leaders and associations. Personal denigration of individual leaders, disparagement of HJ, BDM, SA etc., against the National Socialist press, one-sided advertising for the Catholic press, against National Socialist forms, against the German salute (non-application, combating others, especially the youth, introduction of substitute salutes, e.g. Heil Pius, Treu Heil, etc.) against the swastika flag and other symbols, against the Horst Wessel song, against pictures of leaders, against uniforms and the like, against state measures,

against winter relief work (stews, etc.), against the law on professional civil servants, against air raid protection and the like, spreading atrocity stories. In this way, the basis of national socialist construction, namely the people's trust in the leadership of the state, was systematically undermined.

Later came the fight against cremation and finally against euthanasia, the killing of the incurably mentally ill. During the entire Third Reich, the Catholic Church did not say a word about the liquidation of Jews, as Friedrich Heer explicitly states in "God's First Love" on page 440. Not even Pius XI mentioned the persecution of Jews in his encyclical "Mit brennender Sorge", nor did Pius XII, who must at least have been fully aware of the sinister activities of the SD detachments on the basis of Hitler's commissar order. It was not for nothing that 560 Catholic field chaplains served in the German Wehrmacht.

The Jesuits were among the most belligerent opponents of the government. Alfred Delp and Alois Grim, both of whom were executed after July 20, 1944, became particularly well known. Delp belonged to the Moltke circle and maintained very close contacts with various leaders of the conspiracy. Apart from the two of them, the Jesuit priests Father König and Augustinus Rösch were particularly active. Rösch even made his parish in Munich's St. Michael's Church available for conspirators' conferences, at which the future borders of Germany were discussed. ("Mirror image of a conspiracy", page 390.)

Regardless of the unpleasant developments between church and state in the German Reich, a new, tangible collaboration of the Catholic Church took place in Austria after the Anschluss in 1938. There were two reasons for this: The effervescent enthusiasm of the population was so strong that the Catholic Church would have been isolated if it had withdrawn from the prevailing mood. In addition, the Catholic Church in Austria had supported the overthrown Austrofascism so massively that it was even called "clerofascism". It was hoped that a radical about-turn would create a brilliant alibi.

There had always been a small German-conscious minority in the Austrian clergy - such as the poet Ottokar Kernstock - which was, however, officially viewed with shy eyes. In 1936, the honest Styrian bishop Alois C. Hudal, who was the rector of the German National Foundation of the Anima in Rome, wrote a sensational book, "Die Grundlagen des NS". In his book, Hudal attempted a compromise between the Catholic Church and the NSDAP. He was rejected by both the Vatican and the radical wing of the NSDAP. His book narrowly escaped being indexed by the Vatican.

On March 18, 1938, the Cardinal Archbishop of Vienna, Dr. Theodor Innitzer, sent a solemn declaration from the Austrian bishops with the following accompanying letter to the Reich Commissioner for Reunification, Gauleiter Josef Bürcke 1:

"Dear Mr. Gauleiter! I am sending you the enclosed declaration of the bishops. You will see from it that we bishops have fulfilled our national duty voluntarily and without coercion. I know that this declaration will be followed by good cooperation.

With the expression of highest esteem and Heil Hitler!

Th. Cardinal Innitzer

The foreword to the solemn declaration of the Austrian bishops reads:

"After enclosed consultations, we bishops of Austria, in view of the great historical hour which Austria's people are experiencing, and in the awareness that in our days the thousand-year-old longing of our people for unification in a great Reich of the Germans is finding its fulfillment, have decided to address the following appeal to all our faithful. We can do this all the more confidently as the Führer's representative for the plebiscite in Austria, Gauleiter Bürckel, has announced to us the sincere line of his policy, which is to be based on the motto: Pray to God what is God's and to the Emperor what is the Emperor's.

Vienna, March 21, 1938

for the Province of Vienna:
Th. Card. Innitzer

for the Salzburg Ecclesiastical Province:
S. Waitz
Prince Archbishop

Solemn Declaration

Out of the deepest conviction and of our own free will, we, the undersigned bishops of the Austrian ecclesiastical provinces, declare on the occasion of the great historical events in German-Austria: We joyfully recognize that the National Socialist movement has achieved and continues to achieve outstanding results in the field of national and economic development and social policy for the German Reich and people, especially for the poorest classes of the people. We are also convinced that the work of the National Socialist movement has averted the danger of all-destroying godless Bolshevism.

The bishops accompany this work for the future with their best wishes for blessings and will also admonish the faithful in this spirit.

On the day of the referendum, it is a natural national duty for the bishops to declare our allegiance to the German Reich as Germans, and we also expect all faithful Christians to know what they owe to their people."

This declaration is signed by Archbishops Theodor Innitzer and Sigismund Waitz as well as Bishops Johannes Gföllner (Linz), Adam Hefter (Gurk-Klagenfurt), Ferdinand Pawlikowski (Seckau-Graz) and Michael Memelauer (Sankt Pölten).

The resistance circles in the German clergy fumed at this action by the Austrian bishops. And the Vatican was also fuming.

Bishop Hudal, who witnessed the events in Rome first-hand, reports:

"Full of hope, however, Cardinal Innitzer returned to his residence from the Hotel Imperial, where the discussion between him and Hitler had taken place, when

he was unexpectedly met by an order from Rome to go immediately 'ad audiendum verbum' to the Vatican. I accompanied him on this painful journey and followed the course of the stormy confrontation in the Pope's antechambers. Finally, like Henry IV in Canossa, he had to give in and sign a new declaration, which had to appear in the Osservatore Romano* the following day, when he had already left Rome. It was a disavowal of the Austrian episcopate in the world forum, but also a legal clarification of the Austrian Concordat, which would continue to apply according to the principle of 'pacta sunt servanda'.

It could not have been otherwise, because immediately after the first announcement by the Austrian bishops, the German Jesuit H. Muckermann intervened on Vatican Radio and launched a fierce attack against the Austrian bishops for 'softening their bones' in the evening broadcast. Several hours earlier, a correspondent of the Berliner Börsenzeitung had distributed copies of this broadcast, which caused great discomfort at the German embassy due to its sharpness, among the international press people in the management of the Stampa estera.

When I had invited the congregation of the German national church of Anima to a service to thank the Lord God 'that no blood was shed during the Anschluss', I received instructions from the Vatican that such a religious celebration could not be held in Rome. '11 Santo Padre si oppone a una tale funzione. Thus a clear line was established. Only the publication of the still hidden documents and letters about the events in Linz and Vienna during Hitler's stay and those about the first activities of the later Reich Governor Bürckel would provide greater clarity.
Governor Bürckel would bring greater clarity to the question of where the initial resistance came from to make this attempt at reconciliation impossible." (Alois C. Hudal, "Römische Tagebücher", page 238 f.)

At this time, the Western world had long since decided to fight against Germany. On 3 December 1936, anti-German circles had gathered in London's Albert Hall and created the "Focus" organization, the British branch of the Jewish trade union world boycott organization "Anti-Nazi Council to Champion Human Right", and elected Winston Churchill, who had just lost his job, as the figurehead of the fight against Germany.

The main aim of "Focus", as the German historian Dietrich Aigner writes, was "not only to make the British aware of the menace of the German danger (German menaca), but also to ensure, through incessant cross-shots and provocations, that Hitler was persuaded to break off his friendship treaty and his aggression against England was directed". (Dietrich Aigner, "Politicians of the 20th Century", page 322.)

Of course, "Focus" forces had also long been at work in the Vatican. In addition to the hateful Jesuit priest Friedrich Muckermann, the most fateful role was played by the Jesuit priest Dr. Leiber, who was also the Pope's private secretary for German affairs. These circles ensured that the Vatican's attitude became increasingly hostile to Germany. Leiber also worked together with the British ambassador to the Vatican, Francis D'Arcy-Osborne. Leiber passed on all the information that the Vatican

received from Germany to him. At the same time, Leiber was the key point of contact for the German resistance in the Vatican. The messages from the resistance around Canaris, mostly delivered by Dr. Josef Müller (Ochsen- sepp), were passed on by Leiber to the British ambassador and from there to London. Also German attack dates.

In such an atmosphere, there was no longer any room for objective cooperation with Germany. The consequences of this anti-German attitude in the Vatican naturally had an impact on the German Catholic Church. Local friction between aggressive priests and HJ leaders occurred again and again and gave a boost to anti-clerical circles within the NSDAP.

Pius XI died and the former apostolic nuncio in Bavaria was elected Pope Pius XII. The high hopes placed in him were not fulfilled. The anti-German forces in the Vatican had long since occupied all the key positions.

A momentous act took place in Germany. Rudolf Hess tried in vain to save the peace by flying to England, risking his life. His managing director Martin Bormann now at the helm of the internal NS party leadership. Martin Bormann was one of the few opponents of the Catholic Church around Hitler. In a circular letter in the fall of 1941, he even attempted to stir up all Gauleiters and Reich governors against the churches. This Bormann draft is cited in the Catholic resistance literature as documentary proof of the Third Reich's hostility towards Christians. 0. Neuhäusler, "Kreuz und Hakenkreuz", page 358 ff).

Unfortunately, it is forgotten that this anti-church circular by Bormann had to be withdrawn by Adolf Hitler's decision after an objection by Reichsleiter Rosenberg and that it was not valid at all. (Heinrich Härtle, "Greater Germany, Dream and Tragedy", page 28 f.)

The hatred against Germany became more and more powerful in leading circles of the Vatican. When Bishop Hudal in Rome wanted to print the prayer he had written for a church service in 1942 for the German and Italian soldiers who had fallen on the Eastern Front, he was refused ecclesiastical permission. Father Dr. Leiber responded to a complaint by Hudal that "Russia was in some respects waging a holy war for the fatherland". (Alois C. Hud 1 al, "Römische Tagebücher", page 212 f.)

The upright bishop rightly wrote in his memoirs: "One could probably not go further in hatred of Germany."

*

In contrast to the Roman Catholic Church, the majority of German Protestantism was far more inclined to "give to the emperor what is the emperor's" due to the content of its faith and the tradition of the regional church. Nevertheless, soon after Hitler came to power, there were fierce disputes between the state leadership and the Protestant Church, which were sparked by the demands of the "Faith Movement of German Christians", which had emerged in 1932 under the leadership of the National Socialist Member of Parliament Kube.

The former twenty-eight independent Protestant regional churches had united on May 25, 1922 in the castle church in Wittenberg to form the German Protestant Church Federation. Despite the merger, the regional churches - Protestant, Evangelical-Lutheran, Evangelical-Reformed, Uniate or predominantly Lutheran or Reformed - retained their full independence in terms of confession, constitution and administration and, like the Catholic Church, were "corporations under public law". The bodies of the Federation of German Protestant Churches were the German Protestant Church Congress with

two hundred and ten elected or appointed members, the Church Federation Council, consisting of the representatives of the regional churches, and the Church Committee as the governing body of the Church Federation, chaired by the first official of the old Prussian regional church, at whose official seat the Church Federation Office was responsible for administration.

Leading circles in the old Protestant regional churches felt challenged by the German Christian faith movement, which sought to deepen Protestantism in the spirit of Luther and bring church and state into line by introducing the Führerprinzip. They took offense at the guidelines of the German Christians, which stated, among other things: "We stand on the ground of positive Christianity. We profess an affirmative, species-appropriate faith in Christ, as it corresponds to the German Lutheran spirit and heroic piety." In addition, there was the annoyance that the German Christians had already won a third of all seats in the local authorities in the church elections in the territory of the old Prussian Union on November 12-14, 1932 - considerably more in the East than in the West. As early as 6 June 1932, the religious movement of the German Christians had adopted the organizational form of the NSDAP with Reichsleiter Pastor Hossenfelder, who was also the party's official in charge of church affairs.

On March 8, 1933, the Protestant Church made its first affront to the NSDAP and its state leadership in a confidential pastoral letter from the General Superintendent Dibelius in Berlin to his pastors, stating: "There will be few among us who do not wholeheartedly rejoice at this turn of events." On the other hand, it must be shown "whether our church has learned to be a church in the bitter school of one and a half decades. In this we must and will agree that the gospel does not know the self-authorized man but the justified sinner, that it does not preach hatred but love, that not the nation but the kingdom of God is the object of evangelical proclamation. We will agree that the Gospel stands in opposition to every human ideology, be it National Socialist or Socialist, liberal or conservative, that the Gospel does not confirm man in his selfish desires but judges him, and that only by submitting to the Gospel can the construction take place in which nation and state, tradition and freedom and all other human things gain their Christian right".

This pastoral letter was described at the Reich Conference of German Christians from April 3 to 5, 1933 as an "outrageous attack by D. Dibelius against our movement" and was the subject of an accusation by the then Minister of Science,

Education and National Education in Prussia, Minister of Culture Rust. At the same time, the synchronization of the

at the same time, there were public calls for the state and church to be brought into line. More conciliatory and understanding than Dibelius' pastoral letter was the Easter message from the Evangelical High Church Council in Old Prussia on April 16, 1933:

"With all Protestant co-religionists we know ourselves to be one in the joy of the awakening of the deepest forces of our nation to patriotic consciousness, genuine national community and religious renewal. As early as 1927 (in the message of the Königsberg Church Congress), the Church called for a struggle and the use of all forces to permeate the life of the people with the power of the Gospel. In the conviction that the renewal of the people and the Reich can only be supported and secured by these forces, the Church knows itself to be gratefully united with the leadership of the new Germany. It is joyfully prepared to cooperate in the national and moral renewal of our people."

"To carry out this service, the Church needs full freedom to develop its life and work. It trusts the government, which has given us the solemn assurance of this freedom."

Similar pulpit declarations thanking the national uprising were issued by all church governments. (Heinrich Hermelink, "Kirche im Kampf", page 31 f.)

On April 23, 1933, the President of the German Protestant Church Federation, D. Kapier, issued the following appeal: "The hour calls for an immediate reform of the constitution of German Protestantism. The aim of the reform is the canine German Protestant Church, established on the basis of and with full respect for the confession. Growing out of vigorous regional churches, it should receive all the powers it needs to cultivate the life of the German church as a whole and its relationship to the people and the state at home and abroad."

To this end, following meetings with church leaders and government representatives in March and April, Kapier appointed the Lutheran regional bishopD. Marahrens in Hanover and the Reformed pastor D. Hermann Hesse in Elberfeld and had himself authorized by the German Protestant Church Committee to "speak and act for the entirety of German Protestantism". The clear, albeit cautiously expressed, meaning of the appeal and also of the constitution of the Committee of Three was to strictly adhere to the inner-church line in the development of the reform work "while fully preserving the confession" and organic growth "from vital regional churches". (Heinrich Hermelink, "Church in Struggle", page 35.)

This was almost the opposite of what the Nazi leadership and the German Christians were striving for.

After a meeting with D. Kapier as president of the Protestant Church Federation on April 25, Hitler appointed the Königsberg military district

Ludwig Müller as his plenipotentiary for questions concerning the Protestant Church with the special task of "promoting all work to create a Protestant German Reich

Church". Müller had been the leader of the German Christians in East Prussia since 1932, and he retained their leadership despite his new assignment.

The fronts - here the state leadership with the German Christians and there the leadership of the Confessing Church - were clear and directed their appeals to the church people.

The Lutherans of all Lutheran regional churches joined together in Würzburg on May 14, 1933 and proclaimed: "The Lutheran regional churches of Germany unite to preserve and represent their common Lutheran confession and to promote the common tasks arising from it to form a Lutheran branch within the future German Protestant Church, subject to the jurisdiction of the individual churches in other respects." The declaration continues: "We wrestle and pray that the awakening of the nation will become a breakthrough to God. "We demand "that the faith of Luther and the confession of the fathers be given free space in the nascent German Protestant Church", that this church "be shaped according to its own laws and that everything alien to it and reminiscent of past parliamentary forms be eliminated".

BishopD. Meiser from Munich, who was elected in an extraordinary synod in Bayreuth as the successor to the previous church president of the Bavarian state church with the title of bishop and given independent powers.

The Uniate members of the various groups of the Old Prussian Union jointly declared: "We thank God that He has given us the new state based on Christianity. We will resolutely reject any attempt to bring state politics into the church.

We affirm the Protestant Church of the German Nation1 and demand that it be built from its own nature on God's Word and the Reformation confession. We advocate the preservation of synodal and congregational bodies and demand spiritual leadership in church and congregation. As important as constitutional issues may be, we strongly emphasize that the life of the church grows out of God's Word and sacrament. Service in the congregation and to the congregation is the main demand that must be placed on every church movement."

According to these guidelines, the regional churches with congregations of different confessions or an existing confessional union have joined together to form a working group of united regional churches.

On May 16, 1933, eight hundred Reformed pastors, elders and parishioners from various Reformed areas stood behind D. Hesse as the custodian of the Reformed confession: "They allow themselves to be called anew to the testimony of faith in the crucified and risen Lord and recognize the Holy Scriptures as the sole standard of their faith, their life and their constitution as the Word of God revealed in the Old and New Testaments. Their confession of the saving Gospel follows the Heidelberg Catechism as the authoritative Reformed confessional document."

At the same time, the German Christians also joined the suffrage movement in the "New Guidelines" of May 16, 1933, in which Professor D. Fezer, Tübingen, and Mission Inspector D. Ludwig Weichert, Berlin, collaborated. The "New Guidelines" have the following wording: "Aim of the movement: In the national uprising in our fatherland, the state has found its way to the German people in a unique way and the

German people in turn have found their way back to the state. It looks as if the German people, in their reflection on the deepest sources of their life and strength, also want to find their way back to the Church. For a German church apart from the German people is nothing but an empty institution. It is only a Christian church among the German people if it is a church for the German people, if it helps the German people in selfless service so that they can recognize and fulfil the calling God has given them. - According to repeated statements by the Reich Chancellor, this is also the ultimate goal for today's state leadership . . . To achieve this goal we call for

1. a new church constitution that appoints the organs of church life not according to the democratic election system, but according to the suitability they have proven in service to the congregation;

2. a spiritual leadership that has to make and take responsibility for the decisive decisions personally;

3. Unification of the Protestant regional churches into one German Protestant Church with reverent protection of legally justified special rights.

We advocate

1. for the complete preservation of the confessional state of the Reformation, but demand a further development of the confession in the sense of a sharp defense against all modern heresies, mammonism, Bolshevism and unchristian pacifism;

2. for the work of the German Protestant Gentile Mission, which Christ's Great Commission demands of the Church and which we take over as a holy inheritance from our fathers. Recognizing the diversity of peoples and races as an order willed by God for this world, we call for the
that the Gentile mission should not destroy the peoples of foreign nations . . .

6. for Christian schools and the education of the entire youth in a spirit that gratefully receives the goods given to us in our nationality and homeland, faithfully cultivates them and passes them on to the next generation as a sacred legacy;

7. generally for ecclesiastical German customs in town and village, for Sunday observance and the cultivation of every good, pious, German custom anchored in our race and our folklore. (Heinrich Hermelink, "Kirche im KampP, page 35 ff.)

On May 26727, 1933, Pastor Friedrich von Bodelschwingh was elected Reich Bishop by the church committee assembled in Eisenach and the representatives of the regional churches on the recommendation of the "Kapier Committee". The regional churches of Württemberg, Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Hamburg and Bavaria voted against the election out of opposition to the hasty procedure.

The German Christians, who until then had placed their full trust in the three-man college of Kapier, Marahrens and Hesse, contested Bodelschwingh's election as Reich Bishop.

On June 15, Adolf Hitler informed the Kapier Committee through his plenipotentiary Ludwig Müller that "the work on the new building of the German Protestant Church has taken a difficult and thoroughly unpleasant turn". He refused

to receive Pastor von Bodelschwingh, and a reception for him with the Reich President was also canceled.

On June 24, Minister Rust appointed District Court Judge August Jäger from Wiesbaden as head of the church department in the Prussian Ministry of Culture, whom Minister President Göring appointed "State Commissioner" with the task of ending the church dispute. Although, according to Minister Rust, the appointment of the state commissioner was only intended to establish contact with the church people, Jäger's appointment led to fierce protests from various regional churches and their leaders. At the next meeting of the Church Committee in Eisenach on June 24, Pastor von Bodelschwingh resigned from his office as Reich Bishop with the following statement: "The appointment of a State Commissioner for the area of all Protestant regional churches in Prussia has deprived me of the opportunity to carry out the task assigned to me. This compels me to return the commission given to me by the German Protestant Church Committee."

In order to do justice to Göring's commission, Jäger, in cooperation with Ludwig Müller, appointed authorized sub-commissioners for the area of all Protestant churches in Prussia. Not only in the upper
church authorities, but also in the independent associations such as the Evangelical Press Association, the Central Committee of the Inner Mission, the Reich Association of Protestant Workers and others, a change of personnel was made in favor of the German Christians.

According to the order of the provisional Prussian church government, July 2, 1933 was to be marked with thanksgiving and intercession throughout the Old Prussian Church. All churches, vicarages and church administration buildings were to be flown with church flags, the black, white and red flag and the swastika flag, and a word to the congregations from Pastor Hos- senfelder, the Reich leader of the German Christians, was to call on them to praise, pray, thank and act in support of the great work of reorganizing the church, as it had now been initiated.

Three Berlin pastors defied this order, one of whom had to remain in custody for a short time. In Westphalia, pastors were dismissed because they did not comply with the State Commissioner's order.

On June 30, 1933, Hitler was asked in writing by Reich President von Hindenburg to "restore peace through negotiations between the churches and government bodies". On July 2, Dr. Frick was commissioned to restore peace between the churches. The new constitution of the German Protestant Church was drafted by representatives of the Kapier Committee with the involvement of representatives of the German Christians and was adopted and signed by representatives of all twenty-eight regional churches in the Reich Ministry of the Interior on July 11. On July 14, it was published with the Reich Law confirming it. All church commissioners were withdrawn at the same time.

The basic Article 1 of the new constitution reads:

"The inviolable foundation of the German Protestant Church is the Gospel of Jesus Christ as it is testified to us in the Holy Scriptures and has come to light anew

in the confessions of the Reformation. This determines and limits the powers which the Church needs for its mission."

Furthermore, it is determined: "The regional churches remain independent in confession and worship." "The German Protestant Church may by law give the regional churches uniform guidelines for their constitution, insofar as this is not bound by confession. It shall promote and guarantee legal unity among the Regional Churches in the area of administration and administration of justice."

"The following are named as organs of the German Protestant Church

1. The church is headed by the Lutheran imperial bishop.
2. The Imperial Bishop is assisted by a Spiritual Ministry.
3. A German Protestant National Synod participates in the appointment of the church leadership and in legislation.
4. Advisory chambers guarantee the free creative cooperation in the service of the church to the living forces of the German Protestant people." (Heinrich Hermelink, "Kirche im Kampf", page 44 f.)

If the new constitution of the church seemed to have finally put an end to the bitterly waged dispute, it broke out again shortly afterwards with ominous ferocity when the German Christians achieved an overwhelming majority in all Protestant church bodies in the Reich in the church elections on July 23, 1933. The Reich Law of July 14, 1933, which had confirmed the constitution of the German Protestant Church, had stipulated that on July 23, 1933, the regional churches united in this church had to hold new elections for those church bodies which, according to current regional church law, were formed by direct elections of church parishioners.

In August 1933, the now elected synods met in the Prussian provincial churches as well as in the non-Prussian regional churches, in which the German Christians switched all authorities, administrations, associations and institutions supported by the church to seventy-five percent for the German Christians in accordance with the election results. At the Prussian General Synod in Berlin on September 5, 1933, the German Christians were also in a decisive majority according to the election results and elected Ludwig Müller to the office of regional bishop. The spokesman of an opposition group, D. Koch-Oeynhausen, was unable to finish speaking at the synod and left the hall with his group.

After this synod, Pastor Martin Niemöller appeared on the scene in Berlin-Dahlem on September 21, 1933 to call for a Pastors' Emergency League. Among other things, he declared in his appeal: 'In the face of the efforts of the German Christians, the church leaders and authorities have failed. "An evil despondency arose among many serious-minded ministers." "For the sake of this need, we have created an 'emergency association of pastors' who commit themselves only to the Holy Scriptures and the confessions of the Reformation: "I commit myself to carry out my ministry as a minister of the Word solely in adherence to Holy Scripture and the confessions of the Reformation as the correct interpretation of Holy Scripture. I commit myself to protest against all violations of such confessions with ruthless

commitment. To the best of my ability, I share responsibility for those who are persecuted for the sake of this confession. . ."" (Heinrich Hermelink, "Kirche im KampP, page 49.)

On September 27, 1933, the National Synod took place in Wittenberg, which elected Ludwig Müller as Reich Bishop. The Reich Bishop had appointed mainly representatives of the German Christians to the "spiritual ministry", with which the representatives of ten regional churches did not agree and lodged a protest "because of the threat to the confessional status guaranteed to the German Protestant Church". The Reich Bishop replied to this protest that he would protect the confessions, but that the old was coming to an end and the new was coming up; the political battle between the churches was over and the battle for the soul of the people had to begin.

A complaint by the Pastors' Emergency Association under Niemöller against "the majority compulsion in the church, against the Aryan paragraph and the persecution of confessionally loyal pastors and church officials" by the group currently in power in the church could not be read out for technical reasons.

Various regional churches protested against a contract concluded by the Reich Bishop with the Reich Youth Leader Baldur von Schirach, which had been rejected by the Führerrat of the Protestant Youth Council. A youth pastor of the German Protestant Church had been appointed to carry out the incorporation of the Protestant Youth Organization into the Hitler Youth.

The "Ordinance on the Restoration of Orderly Conditions in the German Protestant Church" of January 4, 1934 caused great excitement among state bishops. Paragraph 1 of this ordinance, known as the "Maulkorberlaß", prohibited "the misuse of church services for the purpose of church political disputes, regardless of the form". Paragraph 2: "Church officials who attack the church regime or its measures publicly or by distributing writings... are guilty of violating the official duty incumbent upon them." Paragraph 3: "Formal disciplinary proceedings shall be instituted immediately against ecclesiastical ministers who violate these regulations with the aim of removing them from office, with immediate provisional removal from office... and their income shall be reduced by at least one third." Paragraph 4: "Repeal of the previous civil service laws restricting the Aryan paragraph."

In addition to the Pastors' Emergency Association, the regional churches of Bavaria, Württemberg, Electoral Hesse, Reformed Hanover, the Lutheran confessional movement and numerous teachers of theology protested against this decree by the Reich Bishop. In Berlin, "Church in Need" confessional meetings were held at nine locations on January 8.

The church leaders who did not belong to the German Christians sent memoranda to Hitler and von Hindenburg on January 24, 1934,
which were followed by a reception for the church leaders with the Reich Chancellor on January 25, 1934.

The Reich Bishop, the regional bishops of Saxony, Hanover, Württemberg, Bavaria, Thuringia and Hamburg, the church leader of Mecklenburg, the president of the Reformed Church in Hanover, the president of the Westphalian provincial

synod, the previous church ministers, the Reich leader of the German Christians and the chairman of the Pastors' Emergency Association were invited. The government was represented by the Reich Minister of the Interior Dr. Frick, the Prussian Minister President Göring, the State Secretary of the Reich Chancellery Lammers and Ministerial Director Buttmann.

According to D. Wurm's report, the audience was opened by reading out a telegram that Göring had received from the political police. Pastor Niemöller had then commented on the reception that the Reich Chancellor had had with the Reich President that morning, saying that "the Reich President would give the Reich Chancellor the necessary directives for resolving the church conflict, and the Reich Ministry of the Interior was also doing well. Hindenburg would give Hitler the last rites, in the worst case the only option would be to join the Free Church". Niemöller allegedly immediately acknowledged the content of the conversation; the phrase "last rites" did not originate from him, as he later assured. He tried to explain the content of the conversation in terms of the difficult battle that the Pfarrernotbund had been waging for months to uphold the church's confession, and emphasized that this battle was not against the Third Reich, but was also being waged *for* it. Hitler replied very sharply that the concern for the Third Reich had to be left to him. Even if he had been willing to separate himself from the person of the current Reich Bishop, he was virtually driven to his side by such methods. It could not be denied that Protestant pastors often stirred up sentiment against the government and National Socialism. As proof, he had Minister President Göring read out a series of political police reports on sermons and church press articles containing such statements.

"In a passionate tone, the Chancellor complained that this dispute in the Protestant Church was making the position of the Third Reich very difficult by exploiting the foreign press. Many Protestant pastors had fought against his movement when it had not yet achieved victory. He had made an attempt to help the church, which had lost the masses in many cases, to move forward; if it was not able to take advantage of the hour, he would withdraw his hand, also financially. He had not imposed Müller on us, but we should not drop him after only four months.

We should not drop him after four months, but should make another serious attempt to work with him. He was born a Catholic and was grateful to fate for this, as he had therefore been able to win millions of Catholics over to National Socialism. Inwardly, he was closer to the Protestant Church, but also expected a different attitude from it than from the Catholic Church.

The church leaders of our group firmly asserted that individual expressions of political dissent should not be taken as proof of a reactionary attitude on the part of the clergy. Our fight was only for the purification of the Church from false doctrine and incompetent leadership; the Reich Bishop lacked the necessary leadership qualities and had also shown himself to be a fool in his management and public statements. The Chancellor replied, among other things, that if the leadership of the Church were to pass to a man we trusted, a fierce battle would break out all the more. Although we had the conservative classes and the majority of priests behind us, a revolution was also taking place in the Church and he foresaw the end prophetically if we did not come to an understanding with the new forces. The leadership of the Church could only be in the hands of a man who had the confidence of the movement . . . The Reich Chancellor concluded with an urgent appeal to sit down with the Reich Bishop in a spirit of Christian brotherhood and thereby put an end to the struggle, which could no longer be endured for the sake of the political situation. The imperial bishop then declared that he would invite the church leaders to a joint consultation concerning the formation of a new spiritual ministry." (Heinrich Hermelink, "Kirche im Kampf*, page 66 ff.)

In the period that followed, it was above all the Reich Minister of the Interior, Dr. Frick, who repeatedly intervened to mediate in the disputes between the leaders of the "Confessing" and those of the "German Christians" among the church people. After he had already announced several times since March 1935 that the Reich government would have to intervene once again in the dispute between the Protestant Church, by decree of the Führer and Reich Chancellor of July 16, 1935, the ecclesiastical affairs previously handled by the Reich and Prussian Ministry of the Interior and the Reich and Prussian Ministry of Science, Education and National Education were transferred to the Reich Minister without Portfolio Kerri. Under Minister Kerri, the Reich Ministry of Church Affairs was formed, which was supposed to finally overcome the internal divisions within the German Protestant Church with its conflicting groups.

Minister Kerri approached his task with great optimism and spent months trying to make the right choice of men for the church committees.

Church committees that all groups, the Confessional Church, the Neutral Center and the German Christians, could agree on.

While the regional churches were prepared to cooperate with the church committees appointed by Kerrl, the brother councils around Pastor Niemöller resisted in regional churches that were not led by the Confessional Church, where they presumed to exercise rights to which they were not entitled. As a result, these unlawful official acts were declared legally invalid and forbidden by the Reich Ministry of Church Affairs.

In June 1937, the controversies with the Reich Church Ministry in the denominational congregations in Prussia had also become so hopelessly heated that action had to be taken with the arrest of around forty leading pastors for violating state laws, namely for jointly deciding to defy the ban on announcing church resignations to the congregation, and also for violating the assembly and flag laws and for distributing leaflets.

In his sermon on Sunday, June 27, Niemöller gave an account of the arrest of eight members of the Reich Brotherhood Council on June 16, who were gathered in the sacristy of the Friedrich Wilhelm Memorial Church. On July 1, 1937, he himself was arrested "for offenses against the malice law, for public incitement to disobedience, for slander and for violations of the ministerial order of February 18, 1937 (prohibition of public announcement of the names of persons who had left the church)".

"The trial began on February 7, 1938; it ended with the defendant's release on March 2, after the court had sentenced him to seven months imprisonment and a fine of two thousand marks and at the same time ruled that the seven months imprisonment and five hundred marks fine had been served by the pre-trial detention. The next day, March 3, 1938, Niemöller was taken by the Secret State Police to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp and later transferred to Dachau." (Heinrich Hermelink, "Kirche im Kampf", page 402 f.)

Pastor Niemöller united thirteen hundred members in his Pastors' Emergency Association as early as September 1933, and by the end of 1933 there were around six thousand pastors. That was more than a third of the entire German pastorate and represented an opposition within the Protestant Church against which the forces willing to compromise could not prevail. The fact that this situation was recognized by the state at an early stage can be seen from various ministerial speeches held at the end of 1934. Göring
attributed the dispute "to a certain extent to the lust for power of certain personalities who tried to form a secret opposition". On December 12, 1934, Goebbels declared in Trier that "the time may come when the state declares that the Protestant Church should finance its twenty-eight regional churches itself if it wants to maintain them by all means. The state had no money for this".

The Württemberg Minister of Culture, Mergenthaler, presented the following on December 17 On December 17, 1934, at the teachers' seminary in Rottweil, the Württemberg Minister of Culture Mergenthaler stated: "As Minister of Culture, who

is responsible for maintaining relations between state and church, I feel compelled to formally declare that if peace does not return to the Protestant Church of Württemberg in the near future, the consequences will be very serious, consequences that we would greatly regret in the interest of fruitful relations between state and church, as they have become historically in Württemberg and throughout Germany."

The Reich Minister of the Interior, Dr. Frick, made detailed and revealing statements on December 5 in Wiesbaden and on December 7, 1934 in Stuttgart, where he stated unequivocally: "It may be that the Reich Church Government, in its efforts to merge the twenty-eight regional churches into the Reich Church, proceeded somewhat too hastily and issued decrees that lacked the necessary legal basis. It started building again where the legality was absolutely certain, namely on the legally enacted constitution of the German Protestant Church. The state has no intention of interfering in church matters. But there is unfortunately very good reason to conclude that all kinds of anti-state and treasonous elements are gathering here under the guise of Christian interests in order to pursue their policies in what is supposedly purely ecclesiastical territory and in this way cause difficulties for the Third Reich. I hereby declare that the Reich Government is not willing to stand by and watch these activities ad infinitum, but that it is determined to take action against such enemies of the state and traitors to the country wherever political necessities require it. The German people have had enough of this church dispute. They have no interest in this bickering of pastors. In any case, the Reich government has no interest at all in co-financing churches that are supposed to serve the inner edification of the German people, but which only bring quarrels and strife to the people." (Heinrich Hermelink, "Kirche im KampP, page 227f.)

I t can be seen from the statements of Reich Interior Minister Dr. Frick that the Reich government correctly assessed the goings-on in the leadership and in the brother councils of the Confessing Church. I t did not know at the time that resisters of the first hour and later key figures in the conspiracy, such as the government councillor in the Prussian Ministry of the Interior
Dr. Hans Bernd Gisevius and Fabian von Schlabrendorff, were already determined to use the Protestant Church for the resistance in 1933/34. The later "managing director" of the conspiracy, Major General Hans Oster, who came from a Protestant pastorate, should also be mentioned in this context.

Gisevius and von Schlabrendorff report on their early connection to Niemöller in their publications. In his book "Bis zum bitteren Ende" (To the bitter end), Gisevius talks about his first personal official relationships with Heydrich and Himmler. At the end of August 1934, he and his colleagues were invited by the Chief of the Secret State Police to gain an insight into the nature and work of the Masonic lodges. "I was," Gisevius said, "extremely grateful for this kind of personal introduction to the black wonderland . . . But when Himmler asked us to join him afterwards and involved us in a conversation about his Teutonic cults, it was too much of a good thing. I couldn't resist launching a few violent outbursts against the

"German Christians" and mocking the beliefs they propagated. At that time, these attempts at Christianization still enjoyed brown protection. They were still acting ecclesiastical. The time was not yet ripe for Rosenberg's myth.

This led to a heated debate. For I was still very young and inexperienced: not because I described myself as a supporter of the confessing church and a friend of Niemöller, Himmler knew that anyway, but because I believed in the usefulness of a debate at all...

Certainly, Heydrich spied on me. For example, he questioned the Gestapo officers as to whether "the reactionary Gisevius" had helped the Steel Helmets or other enemies of the state during the few months he was employed by the Gestapo. He kept a record of how often I was seen at Niemöller's church. He sent his informers to the Ministry of Economics to find out when and in whose company I had been with Schacht. The decrees from the Ministry of the Interior that I was working on were carefully collected and my phone calls were tapped. He placed the results in dossiers. If this was never used against me during my lifetime, I am convinced that it was because our antagonism was all too well known." (Hans Bernd Gisevius, "Bis zum bitteren Ende", page 204 ff.)

There can be no doubt that Niemöller and the leadership of the Confessional Church greatly appreciated their friend Gisevius as an informer in the Prussian Ministry of the Interior and the Gestapo, as he kept them constantly informed of the government's plans and intentions regarding the Protestant Church and its various groups.

Gisevius goes on to write: "Hitler hated him (Niemöller) as 'the' ecclesiastical antipodean . . . I don't know of anyone else who resisted so openly, who had such a strong influence on his ever-growing congregation from the camp cell, who was finally even drawn into the investigation of July 20 and interrogated about why so many of his personal friends were among the conspirators, and who then lived to see the day of liberation - shrouded in the deadly threat until the very last hour . . .

The ghetto into which the Nazis wanted to imprison Christianity and which some Christians believed they should submissively recognize could not be accepted. The spell of the "church" had to be broken. The path of the confessional church pointed in a direction where for most German Protestants until 1933 lay something like a forbidden zone: right into the middle of "politics".

It may be that Niemöller himself made this transition from an apolitical to a political church struggle more unconsciously than consciously, especially as he was never allowed to expose himself to the Gestapo's watchful sniffer dogs. But these political postulates, which he later championed so convincingly, were not alien to him in 1933 and 1934. I would not know of any of our many conversations that were not political in this sense. What was his brusque "no" to National Socialism other than pure politics? The people sitting under his pulpit understood very well what practical consequences he was suggesting to them. Hitler and Himmler were even less mistaken when they fought Niemöller on their own political level." (Hans Bernd Gisevius, "Bis zum bitteren Ende", page 244f.)

Gisevius thus confirms that Niemöller did not want to limit himself to his priestly task of caring for the salvation of his believers and was not prepared to give to the emperor what was the emperor's. In doing so, however, he ignored the biblical word of the Bible. In doing so, however, he ignored the word of the Bible as well as the spirit of Luther in order to move along a dangerous path to politics, on which many of his fellow ministers did not want to follow him. Gisevius also commented on this in the above-mentioned passage of his publication: "But that was only one side of his struggle. On the other, Niemöller had to defend himself against those who were closest to him in terms of his entire background. These were the 'patriots', those good church Christians from the time of 'throne and altar', who were still troubled by the neuralgic suffering of Protestantism, its questionable tendency to be subservient to any government...

These people were by no means Nazis. Very often they were in opposition. They wanted nothing more than for this brown torment of conscience to be taken away from them. That is why
Niemöller was sympathetic to them as a militant man. But why is he always so careless? Does he have to say everything so harshly? Is it permissible to attack the government as well as the party? Isn't he playing politics? What should foreign countries say? Doesn't he interfere with Hitler's assertion of "just" foreign policy demands? Isn't it possible, even in the church for the time being?

Niemöller had to take this mentality very seriously. He encountered it from his immediate surroundings in daily variations..... There is a great desire to be accompanied by like-minded people at the decisive moment, hesitating, questioning and frowning, or even to be left in the lurch. . . No, only here did he encounter the real problem of the church struggle! "

Gisevius reports on the pastor's son Hans Oster: "Oster, this tireless man, plays a significant role in the background, but only in the background, because since my dispute with Heydrich (in the summer of 1934) he too has become suspect. If Canaris had not held his protective hand over him, he would probably have been deported to the provinces long ago. Only in the coming crisis, when he is so blatantly right with his warnings, will he be brought out of his isolation again." (Hans Bernd Gisevius, "Bis zum bitteren Ende", page 247.)

How the conspirator von Schlabrendorff made contact with Niemöller in 1933 is revealed to us in his brochure "Officers against Hitler", page 28. His friend at the time, von Bismarck, Secretary of State in the Prussian Ministry of the Interior, had approached the Reich Minister of War, General von Blomberg, with the request to work in the cabinet against the NSDAP's idea of the state, which von Blomberg firmly rejected. Referring to this process, von Schlabrendorff writes: "In contrast, we found a completely different echo with Martin Niemöller, who drew attention to himself with his first powerful sermons as a pastor in Dahlem and later, as leader of the Confessing Church in Germany, gave Protestantism a new impetus and, through his teaching and life, greatly disappointed Hitler's assumption that the Protestant Church in Germany could be dealt with quickly. At the same time, he provided the

ideological basis for a large part of the German resistance movement. In this work, he found strong support in Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a son of the well-known Berlin psychiatrist. Dietrich Bonhoeffer trained young theologians of the Confessing Church in word and writing at a branch in Pomerania. His work in the ecumenical movement gave him the opportunity to establish relationships with non-German circles."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, whose bride was a cousin of von Schlabrendorff, was sentenced to death for treason and treason against the country after July 20, 1944 and shot on April 9, 1945. A blatant betrayal of the country
was his contact in May 1942 with the English Bishop of Chichester, George Bell, who was in Stockholm at the time to confer with Swedish church leaders about closer ties between English and Swedish church leaders.

Together with his co-conspirator Dr. Hans Schönfeld - disguised in Germany as V-Leute of Department Z of the conspirator Colonel Oster of the Canaris Office in the High Command of the German Armed Forces and uk-placed by him - he used this opportunity to meet with the English bishop and present him with a detailed report on the plans of the conspiracy to overthrow Hitler with the request to inform the English government of this and to reach an agreement with it regarding support and willingness to negotiate peace with a new German government after the successful removal of the Hitler regime.

Bonhoeffer assured the English bishop that the action of the conspiracy should be seen as an act of repentance, to which Bishop Bell replied - as Karl Bartz reports in "The Tragedy of the German Defense" - "It would be necessary for Germany to publicly declare its repentance, and it will be necessary for Allied troops to occupy Berlin", to which the German Schönfeld in turn agreed: "There will be no other way. With the help of the occupation, better control could be exercised."

On his return to London, the English bishop submitted a detailed report to Foreign Secretary Eden with a memorandum, which was also presented to Prime Minister Churchill, with the result that it was shelved; Churchill did not trust the German generals.

Bishop Georg Bell only received the following lines:

"Personally and privately
Foreign Office, S.W. 1
17thjul I y, 1942

Dear Mr. Bishop!

When you visited me on June 30, you were kind enough to give me a memorandum about your conversations with two German pastors whom you had met in Stockholm at the end of May, together with a reproduction of a statement by one of the pastors.

These interesting documents have now been examined in great detail. Without in the least impugning the sincere conviction of your rapporteurs, I have no doubt that

it would be contrary to the interests of our nation to give them any reply. I am well aware that this decision will disappoint you somewhat, but

in view of the delicate circumstances involved, I cannot but ask you to accept it, as I am sure you will understand.

Yours sincerely, Anthony Eden"

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was the same pastor who, at a secret church meeting in 1941, believed he had to declare that he had to pray for the defeat of his people, because only through defeat could the German people atone for the crimes they had committed against Europe and the whole world. (Karl Bartz, "Die Tragödie der Deutschen Abwehr", page 117f.)

The above examples show that the Confessing Church was charged not only with high treason but also with the serious crime of treason, for which there can never be a genuine motive worthy of recognition. Religious and ideological motives for a confrontation with the state of the Third Reich could of course be accepted, as long as this could not impair the defensive power of the German people against its external enemies during the war, i.e. if it had been limited to the pre-war period. There is no valid motive for the serious crime of treason, regardless of the type of state constitution in which the nation is governed.

The Marxist resistance groups

While the opponents on the right, the conspiring Russophile General von Schleicher and his helpers, exercised restraint after Hitler came to power in the illusion that the "drummer" would run himself to death, the danger from the left was still very threatening. The Marxist parties, Communists and Social Democrats, still had 12 million votes behind them in the Reichstag elections of March 5, 1933, of which almost five million were behind the Communists alone. After Hitler came to power, the Communists in particular continued their terror on the streets of Germany, to which National Socialists, mostly SA and SS men, repeatedly fell victim.

Under this impression, Hitler turned to his party comrades, SA and SS men, on February 2, 1933 to warn them with the following words: "For thirteen years you have followed me with rare discipline. The com

munist murder organization has been irresponsibly agitating against the national uprising for days. Nobody loses their nerve! Keep calm and discipline! Do not allow

informers and provocateurs to mislead you in obeying this order of mine. The hour of the suppression of this terror is coming." (Erich Kern, "Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich", page 11 f.)

The announced hour came on February 27, 1933 with the Reichstag fire, which the Reich government was convinced would be the beacon for the still intact Red Front to strike out. The last cadres of communist terror were to be crushed by arresting their leaders and functionaries and sending them to concentration camps.

After this rigorous crackdown, there was also increasing calm in the vast country, and the multifaceted economic reconstruction program to eliminate mass unemployment, which encompassed all possibilities, was able to take its course unhindered after the Reichstag had also approved the Enabling Act, the law to remedy the distress of the people and the Reich, on March 23, 1933.

All bourgeois parties felt compelled to approve this Enabling Act in order to overcome the great hardship that had befallen the German people following the Versailles Dictate. Even the Social Democratic parliamentary group could not dare to bring down the bill by abstaining from the vote and was content to vote against the law in order to at least save face with its SPD supporters.

Without the complete elimination of the major Marxist parties with their tightly-run militant organizations from the state and the people, the reconstruction measures that brought the army of around seven million unemployed back to work and bread in the shortest possible time would have been unthinkable.

This elimination was recognized by the bourgeois parties and the people as a whole, with the exception of those affected by harsh measures who had lost their livelihoods or even had to be locked up in a concentration camp.

From the spring of 1933, after their party was banned, more and more leading Communist functionaries left Germany, many by party decision, some on their own initiative. After the party had decided to move the Politburo and Secretariat abroad following the many arrests, Ulbricht traveled to Paris at the beginning of October. The following resolution of the Executive Committee of the Comintern (ECCI) of April 1, 1933 shows how completely wrong the Communists were in their assessment of the national uprising by Hitler and his movement:

"... The momentary calm after the victory of fascism is only a temporary phenomenon. .. The establishment of the open fascist dictatorship, which destroys all democratic illusions in the masses and frees the masses from the influence of the Social Democrats, accelerates the pace of Germany's development towards proletarian revolution... It is necessary to consolidate the party and strengthen all mass organizations of the proletariat, to prepare them for the overthrow of capitalism and the fascist dictatorship through armed insurrection."

After the emigration of the KPD sp i tzen functionaries in the fall of 1933, it was decided in Moscow to form a national leadership for the entire Reich in Berlin. It was to include the district secretaries of Saxony, Berlin and the Rhineland, Ferlemann, Lambert Horn and Hans Fladung. However, they were arrested before they could properly begin their work.

Now Wilhelm Kox, who had been sent to Berlin from the Lenin School in Moscow in December 1933, tried to maintain and consolidate contact with the districts through couriers and constructors. They endeavored to bring out the "Rote Fahne" again, in addition to information material and a press service.

In Moscow, the Communist International decided to set up a new illegal KPD apparatus. Comrades Pieck and Ulbricht, who were already in Moscow and had taken over the leadership of the KPD in exile after Thälmann's arrest, proposed Herbert Wehner, a member of the KPD parliament in Saxony, as special representative for Germany. Provided with money and material by Comintern chairman Gregorovich Sinojew, Wehner first traveled to the Saar in 1934 and then attempted to set up an illegal KPD network in Germany from Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Copenhagen, Oslo and Stockholm. This game of espionage and sabotage continued until February 18, 1942, when the Swedes arrested the Soviet agent Wehner and sentenced him to a year in prison for espionage and sabotage against Germany.

Even after Wehner's arrest, no effective communist resistance group was formed in Germany. The various communist agent groups set up by the Soviet Red Army, above all "Die Rote Kapelle", Berlin, and the "Rote Drei", Switzerland, Dr. Sorge's Millet Group in Tokyo, took over espionage and sabotage against Germany. It is interesting to note that these agents also considered themselves members of the "resistance".

Even today, the media in the Federal Republic of Germany are still very cautious about the activities of these enemy agent groups. It is symptomatic that in the case of these communist agent
groups, as with all resistance groups, the real workers were completely absent. Here too, the traitors were all intellectuals, even aristocrats and officers.

The present documentation does not leave enough space to describe the many attempts of the communist illegality to continue their resistance against the National Socialist state with the help of the Comintern. Further excerpts from the publication "The German Resistance against Hitler", edited by Walter Schmitthenner and Hans Buchheim, are merely intended to show that attempts by the international Bolshevism against the Third Reich, which was hard-managed by Moscow, were repeatedly smashed by the Secret State Police, which was demonized by the July 20th conspiracy, in order to put a stop to it once and for all until it was able to develop again after 1945.

"Due to the frequent changes of functionaries in the national leadership during 1934, it was not really possible for it to carry out continuous work. In spring 1935, a new national leadership - consisting of Adolf Rembte, Robert Stamm and Max Maddalena - was sent from Prague to Berlin in order to implement the new united front tactics (Communists with Social Democrats) that the party had decided on in the meantime. But after just a few weeks, the regional leadership was crushed. When it attempted to define further guidelines for illegal work together with some

district leaders, all participants were arrested by the Gestapo during a meeting on March 27, 1935. A new regional leadership was not formed later.

. . . After the heavy bloodletting of the illegal social democratic and communist groups in 1933, there was no longer a mass basis for the united front...

The Moscow trials that began in August 1936 with the shameful spectacle of the liquidation of the old revolutionaries and finally the German-Soviet non-aggression pact shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War also destroyed the last hopes for a united front of Social Democrats and Communists in Germany . . .

In the meantime, however, a whole series of new illegal groups had emerged, operating on their own initiative completely independently of 'the top'. The two most important were the groups around Robert Uhrig and Anton Saefko. Uhrig, who had already been sentenced to one and three-quarter years in prison by the Berlin Court of Appeal in November 1934 for "preparation for high treason", thought the time had come after his release in 1938 to once again work illegally with his friends from their time together in prison. . . At the beginning of 1940, Uhrig and his close associates set about forming an organization which, in the course of time, comprised at least 100 people in Berlin. In addition to establishing links

In addition to establishing links with groups in Tyrol, Vienna, Essen, Hanover, Hildesheim, Dortmund and Hamburg, they also made contact with the former Freikorps leader Dr. Joseph ('Peppo') Römer in the autumn of 1941. 'According to the credible testimony' of a co-defendant, Römer's plans included the formation of an organization that would take over power in close alignment with the Soviet Union when National Socialism collapsed. Uhrig and Römer initially agreed that the two groups would work together while maintaining their independence. In further meetings, the organizational preparations were made to create district leaderships everywhere and later a central Reich leadership. In addition to the publication of an 'information service', which had been published monthly since November 1941, Uhrig and Römer also decided to set up 'active groups', 'which were to be deployed in terror operations according to the situation'.

Before these more ambitious goals were realized, the Gestapo, probably with the help of an informer, was able to arrest Uhrig and Römer as well as most of the members of their groups.

Similar to Robert Uhrig, Anton Saefko also began to establish new relationships in Berlin after his release from prison and concentration camp in 1939 in order to be able to work illegally again. Together with Franz Jakob, who had fled from Hamburg in October 1942 before his arrest, and Bernhard Bästlein, who joined him in May 1944, he worked tirelessly and tenaciously to develop extensive activities in Berlin and also established contact with the strong communist organizations that had emerged in Saxony and Thuringia as well as in other German cities at the same time. In its later verdict, the Supreme Court stated that the most serious dangers for the Reich had been evoked here. . .'

In an effort to find out about the intentions of the Communist resistance movement, the Social Democrats Dr. Julius Leber and Professor Adolf Reichwein

met with Saefko, Jakob and Ferdinand Thomas in a doctor's apartment in Berlin's Schönhauser Allee on June 22, 1944. Immediately before the second meeting on July 4, all participants were arrested. Who tipped off the Gestapo is still unclear, as is the extent of this group's illegal activities and their widespread connections." (Walter Schmitthenner and Hans Buchheim, "Der deutsche Widerstand gegen Hitler", page 190 ff.)

The latter communist resistance group Saefko-Jakob-Baestlein, which was considered the most important, was just as connected to the July 20th conspiracy as it was to the Red Orchestra.

A series of articles in the Hamburg "Volkszeitung" (July to October 1947) entitled "Warum der 20. Juli scheiterte" (Why July 20th failed) provides information about the connections and activities of this group. It reads: "But we came together with those who were looking for a way out. Concern for the existence of the German people united the most diverse political tendencies. Franz Jakob soon came into contact with the resistance fighters of July 20th. They were reserved and suspicious of the representative of a workers' party. But his high intelligence, coupled with a sympathetic modesty, animated by a fervent will to victory, overcame the initial mistrust and won him the goodwill of artists, writers, doctors, officers, economists, priests etc. The doors to intimate meetings were opened to him, where everyone was allowed to express their fervent hatred of Hitler without fear of being denounced.

It was felt to be particularly invigorating to hear a worker functionary whose comments on the current situation were listened to with interest. We received some valuable information in return, so to speak, including a very specific one about the current state of production of the V-2, probably in the hope that we would pass on this information when we made contact abroad."

On June 29, 1944, Franz Jakob, who was arrested on July 4, said to his wife: "Now the time has come for us to make a pact even with the devil, i.e. the generals, and stage a coup d'état together." (Rudolf Pechei, "German Resistance", page 70.)

Pechei goes on to report on the same group: "Its members were Communist and Social Democratic workers and men and women from the middle classes. In thirty Berlin industrial enterprises, most of which worked for the armaments industry, company groups were set up that maintained contact with other resistance groups in Hamburg, Leipzig, Dresden, Magdeburg and other cities. They eagerly collected money and raised large sums by selling scarce goods for the development of illegal work. "There were also connections to Sweden." (Rudolf Pechei, "German Resistance", page 93 f.)

"The resistance group I e (Saefko-Jakob-Baestlein) had made preparations for the final battle. They secured weapons and ammunition wherever they could. Through connections with its friends in the army, it also succeeded in getting weapons and ammunition to resistance fighters in the oppressed European countries." ("On the history of the anti-fascist resistance movement 1933 to 1945", page 151.)

The motive for the resistance of the communist resistance groups against the Third Reich is as clear as daylight: the overthrow of Hitler as a decisive preliminary stage to the victory of the Marxist-Bolshevik World
power. There can be no talk of a religious motive, because for Marxists religion is opium for humanity. Even the motive of having fought for morality and justice can never be claimed by the communist after the Marxist rule of the Soviets has more than 50 million murdered Russians and members of other peoples on its conscience.

According to the report by Hans Joachim Reichhardt, head of the contemporary history department of the Berlin State Archives, in the publication "The German Resistance to Hitler" edited by Walter Schmitthenner and Hans Buchheim, the SPD party executive decided " . . . to send some of its members abroad in order to be able to continue working from there. However, the representatives of the legal party course on the executive committee, above all Paul Lobe and Max Westphal, continued to pursue the tactic of keeping the remnants of the party organization together by renouncing all activity . . .

An open conflict between the two sides of the Executive Board was inevitable. It reached its climax with the call to "break the chains" in the first issue of "Neuer Vorwärts", now published in Prague, on June 18, 1933. The effects of this declaration of war had serious consequences. Just four days later, the leaders who were still within reach were arrested . . and the SPD was banned . . .

The Social Democratic resistance groups, as they developed in May and the following months (1933), did not form a unified whole. Particularly in the left-oppositional districts of Saxony and Thuringia, which were very critical of the party executive, attempts were made to transfer the cadres of regional party units into illegality and to exploit the period until the expected party ban for a planned expansion of illegal work. Both at the meeting of the SPD Reichstag parliamentary group on June 10 (1933) and at the Social Democratic Reich Conference on June 19 (1933), the leading members of the party executive still rejected illegal work.

The supporters of illegality among the participants of the Reich Conference met immediately afterwards in a separate meeting to form a central committee for illegal work in the Reich, to which Erich Rinner, Curt Geyer, Kurt Schumacher, Herbert Kriedemann and Paul Siebold belonged. However, after Schumacher's arrest in the summer of 1933 and the emigration of Rinner and Geyer, this committee broke up again in the fall of 1934. For security reasons, direct links were later established between individual groups in other districts and Prague. The executive committee now in office there regarded it as its task to inform the Socialist International and foreign countries about
about the true conditions in National Socialist Germany and, conversely, to provide the illegally working comrades in the Reich with information and support them in their activities . . .

Soon after January 30, 1933, a number of younger Social Democrats joined the students, so that by the end of 1933 an estimated 3,000 people belonged to the Rote Stoßtrupp (RS) . . . In various apartments ... at times also on a motorboat on the

Wannsee, the newspaper "Der Rote Stoßtrupp" was produced on pull-off machines. It was published regularly every eight to ten days with a print run of 3,000 copies. It was distributed to the groups of five via a well-organized system of liaison officers and extended not only to Berlin, but also to the Mark Brandenburg and on to Breslau, Bielefeld, Stettin and the Palatinate. ... . "

No. 10 of June 21, 1933 states:

" . . . Fascism can only be defeated by the coming proletarian revolution... For political and organizational reasons, the SPD and the KPD have failed. It is now our task to create a new revolutionary workers' movement that learns from the mistakes of the past and is prepared to fight for the Socialist Republic at the cost of freedom and life . . .

The "proletarian revolution" and the "socialist republic" were, of course, only distant goals. This propaganda was initially only intended to achieve : Gathering all the still active forces from the SPD and other organizations of the workers' movement, informing its own members and forming a core of reliable and proven functionaries who could have been deployed in a certain phase of revolutionary development.

But as early as December 1933, the RS was smashed by the Gestapo, probably through betrayal within its own ranks or carelessness on the part of some distributors. . .

The great wave of arrests at the end of 1933, which affected not only the Roter Stoßtrupp but also many other social democratic groups in Berlin, destroyed many illusions about the effect of illegal publications and about an early end to the Nazi regime. The result of the plebiscite of November 12, 1933, on Germany's withdrawal from the League of Nations showed that the Nazi regime would soon come to an end. . . quite clearly that Hitler's policies now enjoyed the approval of large sections of the population (over 90 percent, the author). . .

The organization of acts of terror was beyond any consideration because the Social Democrats believed that such a form of resistance would not have shaken the rule of National Socialism at that time, but only strengthened it even more . . .

Social Democratic resistance continued, although after the party executive moved from Prague to Paris at the end of November 1937, many links with groups and individuals were gradually severed. Social Democratic politicians, such as the former Hessian Minister of the Interior Wilhelm Leuschner, the Reichstag deputies Julius Leber and Carlo Mierendorff and many others, some of whom had only been released from concentration camps in 1937, came to the conclusion that the totalitarian system could not be eliminated with the resistance methods practiced since 1933, but only with the support of the Wehrmacht. While they endeavoured to find men of their confidence throughout the Reich and to build up an organization that would be able to take over political functions again immediately after the fall of the regime, they made contact with resistance circles in the bourgeoisie and oppositional military men, which then led to the July 20th movement." (Walter

Schmitthenner and Hans Buchheim, "Der deutsche Widerstand gegen Hitler", page 174ff.)

The above report shows unmistakably that international Marxism had already played out in Germany by the end of 1933, that the overwhelming majority of the German people had found their way back to themselves.

The resistance of the Kreisau Circle

Since the summer of 1940, a circle had come together around Count Helmuth James von Moltke, whose name derives from Moltke's Kreisau estate in Silesia.

Count von Moltke was the great-grandnephew of the field marshal under Kaiser Wilhelm I and his mother was an Englishwoman by the name of Dorothy Rose-James. He had learned to love England and English liberalism through his mother, and the godparents of both his sons were English. Before the war, he had worked as a lawyer in Berlin, but was also admitted to the bar in England after passing the examinations there. He became a member of the "Inner Temple". Among his friends from his Oxford and London days, including Adam von Trott and in particular (the Englishman) Lionel Curtis, he was known as an irreconcilable opponent of the Nazis. During the war, he served at the High Command of the Wehrmacht as an expert on war and international law.

The aristocrats Peter Graf York von Wartenburg, cousin von Stauffenberg, Dr. Horst von Einsiedel, Dr. Dietrich von Trotha, a Silesian cousin of Moltke, Legation Councillor Adam von Trott zu Solz, Josef Emst Fürst Fugger zu Glött, Legation Councillor Hans-Bernd von Haef- ten belonged to the Kreisau Circle. Other active members of the circle were the socialists Dr. Carlo Mierendorff, Professor Adolf Reichwein, Dr. Julius Leber and Dr. Theodor Haubach, the Catholics Jesuit Father Delp, Jesuit Provincial in Bavaria, Roesch, Father König S.J. and the two members of the Confessing Church, Prison Pastor Dr. Harald Poelchau and Consistorial Councillor in the Foreign Office of the Protestant Church Eugen Gerstenmaier.

Count von Schwerin-Schwanenfeld, who had been in contact with the military resistance movement from an early stage, was in contact with Moltke. The banker Abs is also mentioned, who, in close contact with York, provided his national economic contributions. Allegedly, the primary purpose of the Kreisauers was not conspiratorial activity and the preparation of a putsch, although various members were also active in this direction, but rather to lay the foundations for a post-Nazi Germany and Europe.

Moltke and his friends saw it as their task to "form a picture of Europe after the war . . . For us, Europe after the war is less a problem of borders and soldiers, of

water-headed organizations and grandiose plans. The real question facing Europe after the war is how to restore the image of man in the hearts of our fellow citizens. But this is a question of education and religion, of organic ties with work and family, of the right relationship between responsibility and aspiration. He added that he and his friends felt greatly encouraged by their contact with Christian groups in the various occupied territories. Only in France, he believed he had to state, was there "no opposition of a truly fundamental character", although there was occasional action. (Hans Rothfels, "The German Opposition to Hitler", page 120ff.)

After the end of the war, the German people had to experience in a horrible way how much our conspirators at that time had fantasized past the reality of post-war Germany and post-war Europe.

For Hifler, according to Irving's report, Britain's true war aims were no longer a secret even in the winter of 1939/40.

"Britain's war aims were clear. They emerged very clearly from an English memorandum dating from Wnt I 1939/40 and dealing with the question of war aims. His troops had captured it in France. It spoke of the destruction of the German Reich and its political division; the disappearance of Hitler alone was not enough. sufficient. It was not a war against 'Hitlerism1 , but against Germany. The memorandum stated that it was inexpedient to state the Allied war aims publicly, for if they were known it could only have the effect of uniting the Germans firmly behind Hitler." (David Irving, "Hitler and His Generals", page 153.)

For Moltke and his friends, considerations about the nation-state character of Europe were no longer an option in 1941. In a memorandum dated April 24, 1941, i.e. even before the Russian campaign, Moltke assumed that Germany's defeat was certain - and necessary. An armistice would not mean peace, and the foreign policy section of the memorandum demanded, among other things: " . ... a unified European sovereignty from Portugal to a point as far east as possible, with the division of the entire mainland into smaller non-sovereign state entities, which have political interdependencies among themselves. At a minimum, the following would be unified: customs borders, currency, foreign affairs including the armed forces, constitutional legislation and, if possible, economic administration."

And this European federation was of course hoped for under the "protective rule" of England. Truly a beautiful dream structure that would certainly correspond to the English ideal of the "balance of power" on the European mainland. Well, Count von Moltke also got to know and appreciate British realpolitik during his studies in England and his legal practice there. It would certainly have been easy for him to acquire British citizenship. If only he had stayed in England instead of confusing the minds in Germany and committing treason, which he himself practiced in a blatant manner.

Hermann Graml from the Institute of Contemporary History in Munich reports: "Moltke deliberately sought contact with resistance groups in the occupied countries, understood it as a practical European policy1 and at the same time wanted to place it at the service of a larger concept. In 1942, he not only wrote to an English

acquaintance that he and his friends were prepared to help the victors to win the peace1, he also assured them that they wanted to help win the war. His connection to the European Resistance (to which, as is well known, many thousands of German soldiers and civilians fell victim, the author) seems to have been part of this consideration, and at the end of 1943 he made concrete proposals to American partners in Turkey.

The group he represented, he said, considered 'an unquestionable military defeat and occupation of Germany to be absolutely necessary for moral and political reasons1.

On this basis, it considered the Allied demand for unconditional surrender to be justified and prior negotiations on peace terms to be impossible; agreement with the West on the basic intellectual and political views, which it regarded as existing - especially with regard to the future of Europe and Germany - was a better guarantee of future cooperation than formal commitments, which could not be given under the present circumstances. On this basis, it proposed military cooperation "on the grandest scale" with the Western Allies. If the Allies were in a position to land in France and push through to Germany and occupy Germany in a large, single operation as soon as the Soviet troops had reached the Tilsit-Lemberg line, for example, the Group was willing - provided that the eastern front could be held - to support such an operation by all means, e.g. through the corresponding behavior of larger German troop units. At the same time, it would set up a "provisional anti-Nazi counter-government", which would take over the non-military part of the cooperation." (Walter Schmitthenner and Hans Buchheim, "The German Resistance against Hitler", page 70).

It could hardly be clearer how much a part of the July 20th conspiracy not only longed for German military defeat at all costs as a prerequisite for overthrow, but was also prepared to assist the enemy in *any way possible* during the war.

The fact that the recommendations of Moltke and his like-minded friends had to fall on deaf ears with the warmongers Churchill and Roosevelt was the result, because the interests of the enemy did not at all correspond to those of the German conspirators. It was not danger to Christianity and morality that motivated our enemies to wage a world war against the German people - these war-makers had no such scruples - but the fact that Germany under Adolf Hitler had become so politically and economically strong again that they feared for the continued existence of the classic English continental policy of "balance of power".

Although the Kreisau Circle included representatives of various political tendencies and social classes, active resistance remained essentially a matter for the upper classes, the nobility. According to Hans Mommsen of the Historical Seminar at the University of Heidelberg, the middle class, or more precisely the lower middle class, was hardly involved, as it almost unanimously supported the national socialist regime. Furthermore, in his opinion, the July 20th conspiracy "was isolated from the mass of the working class despite the active involvement of leading socialists; there was only conjecture about their attitude towards a coup;

Surveys initiated by Delp led to less than encouraging results, and Trott referred to the view of the Kreisau Circle when he reported in his foreign policy memoranda (i.e. treasonous conspiracies, the author) up to 1944 that the working class was largely passive.

The decisive factor here was the early and effective smashing of the illegal socialist and communist organizations, which led Theodor Haubach to the conviction that conspiratorial activity could only be continued on the basis of friendly contacts. . . The uncertainty about the possible behavior of the population, most of whom at times followed Hitler, had a considerable influence on the political thinking and plans of the opposition - in contrast to the non-German resistance.

The active resistance had a comparatively homogeneous structure. It consisted mainly of members of the upper class who . . considered themselves personally qualified to take on political leadership tasks." (Walter Schmitthenner and Hans Buchheim, "The German Resistance against Hitler", page 75 f.)

Adam von Trott zu Solz was regarded as the "foreign minister" of the Kreisau Circle, so to speak. An English friend was able to write to him in August 1938: "For us, nationalism is an illusion for the masses, a tragic and terrible force; it must one day be transformed into internationalism as we feel and live it."

Von Trott zu Solz was the son of a Prussian Minister of Culture and grandson of an American grandmother, who in turn was a granddaughter of the first Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court, JohnJays. This half-Anglo-Saxon ancestry explains Trott's inclination towards the international world of ideas, which enabled him to make use of his connections with England and America for the conspiracy. In the summer of 1939, he was in London, like other conspirators before him, to inform English politicians about the German resistance and to appeal to them for moral support.

"Despite the blockade," reports Hans Rothfels, "Trott managed to reach the United States in October 1939. The stated purpose of the trip was to attend a conference of the American Institute of Pacific Relations. However, the fact that the Foreign Office (Weizsäcker?) sent him to the USA - during the war - as an expert on East Asian issues was obviously a cover for a very different mission. In a conversation with the editor of the Washington Post, Felix Morley, Trott explained his real intention as being to prepare a receptive attitude in America towards the great upheaval which, in his opinion, was imminent in Germany. . .' 'The main task is to ensure that

The main task is to ensure that the program of a war of annihilation does not force all those elements to join the National Socialists who have begun to come together to overthrow Hitler. Thus he saw it as his goal to prevent the increasingly assertive equation between Germany and the Nazi regime and thus to open the way for a timely peace of reason." (Hans Rothfels, "The German Opposition to Hitler", page 144 ff.)

Trott was unsuccessful with his treasonous conspiracy in America, however, because he was falsely suspected of working with Nazi agents there.

Despite this failure in Washington, the conspiracy made another attempt in November 1941 to win over the American President Roosevelt to their cause, which also failed because he had decidedly different ideas about post-war Germany than our conspirators. Even then, Gerstenmaier and his friends should have realized that they had fallen victim to a fatal illusion in their assessment of the enemy's war aims.

If one asks about the motives of the members of the Kreisau Circle, one will superficially speak of an unjust state, immorality and irreligion in the Third Reich, as is the linguistic rule for all resisters, because one believes that this is the most effective way of justifying their actions to the German people. But if you take a closer look, these motives are less genuine than feigned. The hatred of former party and trade union officials towards the Nazi state is humanly understandable, because they lost their leadership role or even their material existence as a result, a motive for resistance that the representatives of the nobility could not claim for themselves. It was no injustice that they had to accept the loss of old privileges and the break into the exclusivity of their class, because they had the obligation to make their contribution to making possible the common destiny of the German people.

The conservative resistance circle

The most important resister in this circle was the former mayor of Leipzig, Carl Friedrich Goerdeler, which is why it is also referred to as the Goerdeler circle. When, in the late 1930s, 1937-1939, leading forces from the Wehrmacht, the conservative camp, the

In the late 1930s, when leading forces from the Wehrmacht, the conservative camp, the churches and the working class, driven by the same hatred of Hitler, increasingly came together to form a united resistance and finally a conspiracy, Goerdeler was regarded as the civilian head of the conspiracy and Colonel General Ludwig Beck as its military head.

At the end of 1931, Goerdeler was appointed by Reich President v. Hindenburg as Reich Commissioner for Price Control in the Brüning government. On May 30, 1932, Brüning proposed Goerdeler to the Reich President as his successor, but Hindenburg rejected Brüning's proposal because, at the urging of General von Schleicher, he preferred von Papen's presidential cabinet. In November 1934, Goerdeler was appointed by Hitler for the second time as Reichsparkommissar and in January 1935 he was also called upon to work on the new German municipal code, for which he had already worked years earlier with the mayor of Königsberg, Lohmeyer, on the board of the German Municipal Association.

In August 1936, Goerdeler drafted a memorandum on the foreign exchange issue at Göring's request, warning against further credit expansion and debt and criticizing

the autarchy plans, which met with harsh rejection. Shortly afterwards, Hitler announced Göring's four-year plan at the Nuremberg Party Congress. Attacks against him by the NSDAP also increased when he came into conflict with them over the Mendelssohn monument in front of the Gewandthaus in Leipzig, which was removed at the will of the city councillors, backed by the district leader, to which he had refused to give his consent. The monument was removed during his lecture tour to Finland. When he returned from there, he demanded that the monument be reinstalled, but it was not; this was probably the external reason for him to take voluntary state retirement on April 1, 1937. Before this termination of his career as a civil servant, he had already made connections with industry, which he could now use according to his own plan.

A compensation payment of 100,000 Reichsmark from the Krupp company for his efforts to establish business relations with foreign countries enabled him to travel to England, France, the USA, Canada, Italy, Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Turkey, Algeria, Libya, Egypt, Palestine and Syria. At that time, he was also able to interest Göring in his information reports from abroad, which he sent to the industrialists Krupp and Bosch, who largely financed his many trips, as well as to Generals Fritsch, Beck, Haider and Thomas. He even officially sent his confidential reports to the Reich Chancellery for Adolf Hitler in the early days of his travels, with which he believed he could win him over to his foreign policy ideas.

In a memorandum of December 1937, which he deposited in New York at the same time, "he expressed himself quite differently without reservation," as Eberhard Zeller reports in "Geist der Freiheit": here he hoped for an uprising of the Germans with the aim of freeing themselves from lawlessness and moral decomposition and creating a liberal constitutional state. Soon afterwards, in January 1938, he met Beck and Fritsch in Berlin. There can be no doubt that he spoke with them in the tone of his New York essay . . .". (Eberhard Zeller, "Geist der Freiheit", page 71.)

The way in which Goerdeler later continued his various treasonous conspiracies with our national enemies will be the subject of the next section. At this point, however, mention must be made of the conspiracy which historiography was only able to take note of in 1972 with the publication of Fritz Günther von Tschirschky's "Memoirs of a High Traitor". It concerns a coup plan that was to be carried out with the help of the Reichswehr in mid-1934, while Reich President von Hindenburg was still alive, and which provided for a directorate subordinate to Hindenburg, to which Goerdeler was also prepared to belong, to ensure the success of the coup.

By the end of 1927, von Tschirschky had already established his "Young Conservative Circle" in the style of the political gentlemen's club founded in Berlin by Heinrich Freiherr von Gleichen, to which the later conspirator Count Helmuth von Moltke from Kreisau also belonged, who, inspired by him, founded the "Kreisau Circle". As he reported, it was important to him to familiarize his young comrades with the burning political issues and "to prepare them for the active defensive struggle against the NSDAP".

Among the guest speakers in his circle were former Reich Chancellors Wirth and Brüning, Lord Mayors Goerdeler and Jarres, Foreign Minister Curtius, Reichsbank Presidents Luther and Schacht, the poet Paul Emst, the journalist von Aretin, editor of the "Münchener Neueste Nachrichten", the Upper Silesian Chief President Lukascheck, the trade unionist Adam Stegerwald and General von Seekt.

"Over the course of two years, the events in Breslau aroused such interest that the Silesian Men's Society, which had developed from his circle, soon had over a thousand members. In my capacity as its secretary, I was invited to numerous events organized by other gentlemen's societies throughout the Reich. I also took part in meetings of the Stahlhelm, the Federation of Farmers, important trade union conferences and those of large chambers of commerce,
business and administration, church, cultural and military life." (Fritz Günther von Tschirschky, "Memoirs of a High Traitor", page 59f.)

On October 11, 1931, a conference was held in Harzburg, which was originally intended to be a joint conference of the NSDAP and the DNVP (German National People's Party). With the participation of the Stahlhelm and many prominent figures from the bourgeois camp, such as Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, Colonel General von Seekt, Crown Prince Wilhelm, representatives of finance, business and the Landbund, this meeting presented itself to the outside world as a new front.

"At this meeting," said Tschirschky, "the men came together for the first time who later formed the core of the resistance group with which I was to work so closely from the Vice Chancellery (Chancellery of Vice Chancellor von Papen, the author). First and foremost, the Munich lawyer Dr. Edgar Jung, the author of the book "Die Herrschaft der Minderwertigen" (The Rule of the Inferior), which was highly regarded at the time. Also Dr. Franz Mariaux, representative of the Ullstein Press in Paris; Erich Müller, chairman of the German University Ring; Dr. Hoppmann from Elberfeld, chairman of the German Academic Associations and Edmund Forschbach, lawyer from Dortmund." (Fritz Günther v. Tschirschky, "Erinnerungen eines Hochverräters", page 72.)

As is well known, the Harzburg conference was a failure. The actual aim of the conference was to find a candidate for the office of Reich President who was acceptable to all groups of the so-called Right, as Hindenburg's term of office was coming to an end. Hitler was not prepared to commit himself on this issue.

Shortly after Adolf Hitler's appointment as Reich Chancellor, Count Stimm, v. Tschirschky's uncle, visited Hindenburg, who had allegedly repeatedly made it clear that he deeply distrusted Hitler. He had also made unusually harsh remarks about General von Schleicher.

Tschirschky reports that his friend Count Nikolaus Ballestrem-Plawniowitz, a Silesian industrialist and member of the Center Party, visited his friend and former Reich Chancellor Brüning on January 30, 1933, who replied to his great concern about Hitler's appointment as Reich Chancellor: "It's good that Hitler has now come to power, after all, he has run out of steam in three weeks." And like Brüning, in

Tschirschky's opinion many were more or less convinced that Hitler would die because of Hindenburg, the Reichswehr and the constitution.

At the beginning of February 1933, Ballestrem told Tschirschky "the plan to support Mr. von Papen with a circle of clear-sighted, courageous young men, as he put it, who were to fight National Socialism from the position of Vice-Chancellor. This plan was based on the fact that von Papen, as Vice-Chancellor and at the same time as Reich Commissioner in Prussia, i.e. as acting Prime Minister, initially occupied an important position in Hitler's government".

Tschirschky agreed to travel to Berlin and determine whether such an undertaking was at all feasible. Received by von Papen for the first time through the mediation of Baron Wilhelm von Ketteier, who was a close friend of von Papen's family, Tschirschky openly and unashamedly expressed his dismay at the political developments and situation. But von Papen replied that the unpleasant phenomena of the first stormy weeks of the revolution would subside. He also believed that the trust placed in him by the Reich President would put him in a position to exert a lasting moderating influence on Hitler through Hindenburg. . .

"I left the apartment in Wilhelmstrasse with the feeling that what you had presented to Mr. von Papen had not only not found an echo, but that you had met with incomprehension and mistrust....

Despite the rejection I felt I had encountered, many friends urged me not to give up on the plan to set up a Wderst I andsgruppe around the Vice-Chancellor. Finally, we came up with the idea of eliminating Mr. von Papen's ambitions by giving him the opportunity to erase his reputation in public as Hitler's stooge and to show that he still represented conservative ideas.

Ketteier suggested to Mr. von Papen that he speak at a large patriotic rally in his capacity as Vice-Chancellor. An opportunity for this presented itself in Silesia, when the return of King Frederick William III's Breslau appeal "To my people" took place on the 17th. "To my people" on March 17th for the 120th time. Mr. von Papen then also agreed to me preparing the event. I therefore traveled to Breslau again and had many meetings there, for example with the Chief President of Silesia, Count Degenfeld, with professors at the university, with student associations, the Stahlhelm, the warrior associations and many other offices, authorities and associations. Then I went back to Berlin and presented my program to Ministerialrat Gritzbach, the then head of von Papen's ministerial office in the Prussian State Ministry.

Mr. von Papen agreed, and I was given authority to organize the rally in Breslau. The authorities, insofar as they were already in the hands of the party, could refuse to participate in a rally organized by the Vice-Chancellor and Reich Commissioner of Prussia, but the SA refused to take part in it as such. However, the event in front of the palace turned into a great patriotic manifestation that resonated throughout the Reich. Mr. von Papen was very pleased with the result. It was also a great political success for him. I accompanied him on the journey back to Berlin. . . I won him over to the idea of having a personal

confidant in the Prussian State Ministry to whom he could delegate special tasks that did not go through the official apparatus of the Ministry. He decided to appoint me to his antechamber in Wilhelmstrasse.

I started work there at the end of March 1933. My job initially consisted of sorting the incoming mail and forwarding it to the Minister's personal advisor, Ministerialrat Gritzbach, with suggestions for processing. This task will initially seem rather unimportant to anyone who has not had an insight into the environment of a constantly overworked minister. In fact, important decisions for the minister's actions often depend on what is submitted or not submitted to him ... It must have been noticeable that so many personalities from politics and business, diplomacy and the Reichswehr, who called on Mr. von Papen almost daily for meetings, always greeted me with great pleasure. Gritzbach therefore teased me: "Tschirschky, you seem to know the whole world."...

It would take several pages to list the names of all those who were among our confidants and informants. I can only mention a few of the large number of personalities from business and culture with whom or with whose often particularly important confidants we had relations in the Vice Chancellery (which could be set up in the meantime):

We received information from the major industrialists Paul Reusch, Robert Bosch, Otto Wolf and Dr. Friedrich Springorum about what was happening in the Ruhr region and in the country in general. We in turn informed them about the intentions and plans of the government. In the churches we were in contact with Cardinal Bertram, Breslau, Bishop Berning, Osnabrück, Cardinal Schulte, Cologne, Bishop Bares, Hildesheim, Bishop Graf Galen, Münster, Archbishop Groeber, Freiburg/Breisgau, with General Superintendent Dibelius and with many pastors of the "Confessing Church".

On the basis of all these acquaintances and long-standing relationships, we built up a kind of intelligence network in the Vice Chancellery that functioned excellently. We received reliable and verifiable information from all over the Reich about what was going on in the party, the SA and the SS, the Stahlhelm and the various authorities. Ketteier,
Bose and I knew many chief presidents, government presidents and some police chiefs, and of course Papen also had his connections ...

Through representatives of foreign newspapers we knew in Berlin - von Wiegand, representative of the Hearst Press for Germany, Louis Lochner senior, representative of the Associated Press for Germany - it was possible to bring news abroad in order to reliably inform the world public about actual events that were taking place in Germany." (Fritz Günther v. Tschirschky, "Erinnerungen eines Hochverräters", page 96 ff.)

So here we see the effectiveness of a resistance nest of the decidedly conservative or rather reactionary aristocracy just a few months after Hitler came to power, at a time when there had been no suppression of the Röhm revolt, no Kristallnacht and certainly no commissar's order for the Russian campaign to

motivate the conspiracy. This proves that the real motives of the resistance on the part of these circles were to be seen above all other motives in the loss of their supposedly acquired old privileges in the higher administrative service, in the diplomatic service and in the Wehrmacht leadership.

In addition, for the decisive part of the leading members of the resistance, there were two things that constantly rekindled their antagonism:

They, the bulk of whom came from the nobility, were of course active or reserve officers through the bank. For them, socially speaking, a person only began as a lieutenant. But Adolf Hitler had only been a private.

Finally, Hitler had another serious flaw in their eyes: he was Austrian, "Comrade Schnürschuh". The phrase "the Bohemian corporal" - because Braunau am Inn was confused with Braunau in the Sudetenland - reflected all the hatred that this caste, which was regressive in feeling and thinking, felt towards Hitler. These two points did not play an insignificant role in the emotional background of the conspiracy.

The fact that Tschirschky and his friends used their well-known representatives of the foreign Hearst Press and the Associated Press to bring news abroad in order to inform the world public about events within Germany, i.e. to provide material for agitation abroad against the Third Reich, amounted to treason. Accordingly, von Tschirschky could confidently have the title of his book changed to "Memoirs of a High and National Traitor".

Tschirschky's wheat for the overthrow was finally to blossom when Hitler came under great pressure in mid-1934 due to the fundamental dispute between the Wehrmacht and the SA leadership.

Carl Goerdeler, the civilian head of the conspiracy, who poisoned German-British relations in the pre-war years through multiple treasonous conspiracies, making it easier for the British warmongers to declare war. Above: Goerdeler before the People's Court, where he was sentenced to death and later executed. Below: Dr. Carl Goerdeler at the laying of the foundation stone of the Richard Wagner monument in Leipzig in 1934. From left to right: Winifried Wagner, Adolf Hitler, Lord Mayor Goerdeler, Reich Governor Mutschmann and Dr. Goebbels.

Ewald von Kleist-Schmenzin, a Pomeranian landowner, was regarded by the leading English politicians and statesmen as a serious emissary of the hard core of the conspiracy, who was also warmly received by Sir Robert Vansittart and Winston Churchill. He was one of the most ardent traitors to the country, who contributed significantly to the hardening of the situation.

On June 17, 1934, von Papen gave the famous Marburg speech to lecturers, students and invited guests, which was prepared by Edgar J. Jung, a friend of Tschirschky's, and was intended to "demonstratively" make the German and foreign public aware "that there were still critical voices in National Socialist Germany". The speech was also intended as a signal to the few open opponents of the regime, the numerous opponents who were ready to act and the large mass of the silent opposition. Edgar Jung was asked by Papen to draft the speech . . .

"On the morning of June 18," Tschirschky continued, "we discovered that the Ministry of Propaganda had actually banned the speech from being printed in the German press the evening before and had prevented it from being broadcast on the radio. This did not prevent the foreign press from reporting extensively on the Marburg speech. We had given copies to the foreign correspondents in Berlin, and they had passed on detailed excerpts to their editorial offices." (Fritz Günther v. Tschirschky, "Erinnerungen eines Hochverräters", page 172f.)

Erich Kern recorded the events of the time in his Adolf Hitler trilogy as follows:

"Goebbels immediately ordered the dissemination of Papen's speech to be stopped and the 'Frankfurter Zeitung', which had printed excerpts of it, to be confiscated. Behind Papen stood a group of younger conservatives (the Tschirschky group, the author), above all Dr. Jung, von Bode, von Detten and Erich Klausner, the leader of Catholic Action. Papen, who on June 20 demanded in vain that Hitler lift the confiscation of his Marburg speech, threatened to resign, along with Foreign Minister von Neurath and Finance Minister Schwerin von Krosigk.

Things now came thick and fast. On June 21, Hitler was asked to go to Neudeck, where he met the Reichswehr Minister von Blomberg at the home of the sick Reich President von Hindenburg, who vigorously demanded that Hitler ensure the necessary easing of tensions, otherwise the Reich President would declare a state of emergency and give the Wehrmacht the necessary powers. Now the crisis had arrived. Hitler, who found himself in a serious dilemma in the case of Rohm and the SA, to whom he basically owed the seizure of power, was trapped. Around him, however, a tragicomedy unfolded that could not have been more spooky.

A stunned Colonel General Haider, then Chief of Staff at the Wehrkreiskommando VI in Münster, was visited by an alleged SA-Obergruppenführer in Münster and told him that he was to be Haider's successor when the SA took over the Reichswehr.

Haider4. He therefore asked to be inducted. Haider rejected this request and reported this meeting to the commander-in-chief of the army, von Fritsch, in Berlin. He learned from him that similar incidents had occurred in various places and that the Commander-in-Chief of the Army had already made forces available in Döberitz for any necessary countermeasures. SA-Obergruppenführer Lutze, who took part in a Reichswehr training trip as a guest in mid-June, showed General von Reichenau a letter he had written to Rohm in which he had seriously warned Rohm against carrying out his action against the Reichswehr.

On June 23, 1934, Captain Patzig picked up a document from his desk in the Reich Ministry that was already there when he arrived that morning. It was an order from Röhm to the SA-Obergruppenführer. They were to arm themselves, the time had come.

Captain Patzig was the head of the Abwehr department. He spent three days trying to find out how that mysterious secret order had reached his desk. In vain. Finally, Patzig presented the document to Major General von Reichenau, who immediately exclaimed excitedly: Now it's high time."

The Chief of the Army Command issued a circular warning to all Reichswehr commands and ordered the troops to be deployed as inconspicuously as possible.

The SA immediately noticed a hostile, often aggressive attitude on the part of the Reichswehr in all places and raised the alarm with their superiors. A dangerous tension arose.

The Ministerial Director for Police Affairs in the Reich Ministry of the Interior, obviously Daluege, informed the Reichswehr's defense department of a meeting of senior SA leaders that had taken place in a private apartment in Berlin. The "guidelines for a violent settlement of the conflict between the SA and the Reichswehr were laid down".

Meanwhile, Ernst Rohm continued to make grandiose speeches to his inner circle of SA leaders and was constantly coming up with new plans. The main problem for him and his friends was to find a way to free Adolf Hitler from the party bureaucracy and the Reichswehr and to win him over to carry out the national revolution.

On June 25, Rudolf Hess spoke at the Cologne radio station and explained: 'The order of the Führer, to whom we swore allegiance, alone is valid. Woe to those who break their loyalty in the belief that they can serve the revolution by revolting. Poor those who believe that they have been chosen to help the Führer in a revolutionary way by agitating from below. Adolf Hitler is a revolutionary in the greatest style and remains a revolutionary in the greatest style. He needs no crutches. Woe betide anyone who clumsily interferes
between the fine threads of his strategic plans under the illusion that he can do it faster. He is an enemy of revolution, be it under the sign of reaction, be it under the sign of communism.4" (Erich Kern, "Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich", page 118 ff.)

On June 30, as is well known, the Röhm revolt was put down in a flash and bloodily by Hitler himself with the help of Göring, Himmler and his Schutzstaffel (SS).

Reich Minister von Blomberg issued the following daily order to the troops:

"To the Wehrmacht, Berlin, July 1, 1934.

With soldierly determination and exemplary courage, the Führer has attacked and crushed the traitors and mutineers himself. The Wehrmacht, as the weapon bearer of the entire nation, far removed from the internal political struggle, will show its gratitude through devotion and loyalty! The Wehrmacht will cultivate the good relationship with the new SA demanded by the Führer with loyalty in the awareness of the common ideals. The state of alarm has been lifted everywhere.

von Blomberg."

On July 2, the Reich President sent telegrams of thanks from Neudeck to Hitler and Göring: "From the reports I have received, I see that you have nipped all highly treacherous activities in the bud through your decisive action and the courageous use of your own person. You have saved the German people from a grave danger. For this I express my heartfelt thanks and my sincere appreciation. With best regards

von Hindenburg."

The Reich Cabinet approved a law on measures of state self-defense, the only article of which reads:

"The measures carried out to suppress treasonous attacks on June 30 and July 1 and 2, 1934, are lawful as measures of state self-defense."

Reich Minister of Justice Dr. Gürtner declared that self-defence measures taken before the immediate outbreak of a treasonous act were not only a right, but also a duty of state.

Erich Kern writes at the end of his report on the Röhm revolt: "A large number of the general staff officers who were the main beneficiaries of June 30th jumped ship the moment their luck ran out, or were only half-heartedly involved."

From the above report by Erich Kern it is clear that before the Röhm revolt was suppressed, forces were at work behind the scenes to stir up the tension between the SA and the Wehrmacht, if possible before the death of the ill Reich President, in order to decide in favor of the Wehrmacht, so that with its help the planned overthrow from above could succeed. The coup planner von Tschirschky had his co-conspirator von Bose "compile a dossier" which contained all the details known to him of the actions planned by Rohm and the SA on the one hand and by Göring and Himmler on the other, as well as the preventive measures of the Reichswehr, details of Goebbels' "press campaign against the reactionaries" and a list of the arrests that had been made.

"This dossier was to serve as a justification for the proposals that Mr. von Papen was to submit to the Reich President for immediate intervention . . . These proposals were as follows:

1. The Reich President was to order the Chief of the Army Command, Colonel General von Fritsch, and General von Rundstedt to report to Neudeck immediately

after the first brief report by Vice-Chancellor Papen, but not the Reichswehr Ministervon Blomberg ; , as the latter was playing Hitler's game with General von Reichenau.

2. After receiving the reports, the Reich President should immediately declare a state of emergency and a state of siege, thus determining the law of action himself, instead of leaving the action against the SA to Hitler and his followers.

3. Hitler and Göring were to be summoned to Neudeck. There they were to be told by the Reich President that the disarmament of the SA would be carried out under the command of the Reichswehr, and that the constitution was temporarily suspended and the exercise of governmental authority would be transferred to the Reich President as Commander-in-Chief of the Reichswehr, who would issue the necessary decrees with a directorate to be formed.

4. This directorate was to include: Fritsch, Rundstedt, Papen, Brüning, Goerdeler, Hitler and Göring.

. In the first stage of our deliberations, Jung's ideas amounted to the complete elimination of Hitler, even to his elimination by assassination. In my opinion, however, at that time, in June 1934, such an assassination would have been very inopportune; it would only have made a martyr out of him, and the consequences would have been incalculable. We therefore only partially adopted Jung's ideas. But the plan of action just described was firmly anchored in our minds. Together, Bose, Ketteier and I put it down on paper in key words. Bose took these notes home to his apartment and wrote them

Bose took these notes home to his apartment and typed them up himself to hand them over to Papen at the last moment. This would have been done by me, as I would have accompanied Mr. von Papen to Neudeck as usual. The proposed measures would have had the following consequences:

Hitler's henchmen and accomplices, especially Goebbels, Rohm, Hess, Himmler, Heydrich, Frick, Lammers and most of the Gauleiters and police presidents, not to mention other party bigwigs, would have been eliminated by being taken into protective custody. Blomberg and Reichenau would have had to bow to the orders of the Reich President... Hitler would have been largely isolated by the measure . . .

The question will be asked whether men like Brüning and Goerdeler would have been prepared to make themselves available. Jung, my friend Ballestrem and others had made contact with both of them and found their agreement in a non-binding form. After a relatively short period of a state of emergency, a National Assembly would have been convened, as provided for in our constitutional plan, and the necessary imperial and constitutional reform would have been decided by it." (Fritz Günther v. Tschirschky, "Memoirs of a High Traitor", page 176 ff.)

When von Papen learned from Tschirschky that Jung and Dr. Mariaux had been arrested, he decided to travel to Neudeck on June 26 after unsuccessful attempts to reach Hitler to protest against these arrests. However, when he phoned the Reich President to request a reception, he was told by State Secretary Meißner in Neudeck

that the Field Marshal's state of health did not permit a visit. Instead, his son, Colonel von Hindenbur I g, would come to Berlin and see Mr. von Papen.

After this cancellation of Papen's visit to the Reich President, there was no longer any chance for the resistance group of young conservatives around Tschirschky. The law of action was once again entirely in Hitler's hands.

Reichsleiter Alfred Rosenberg wrote in his diary on June 28, 1934: "The whole reaction, fired up by Papen, wants to walk over the movement. . . The Führer said that he had had Dr. Jung, the author of the unbelievable Papen speech, arrested. The Vice-Chancellor has just asked whether the Führer could receive him today. Hitler laughs: 'He's coming because of his Dr. Jung!" and says no. In the garden I show the Führer the reports of the N.I.Z., whose information could only come from the Papen store. The Führer points to the gray front at the end of the garden: "Yes, that's where it all comes from, I'll have the whole office excavated once.4"

On June 30, Tschirschky was arrested by the Secret State Police and imprisoned in the
Lichtenberg concentration camp near Dessau and released again on July 6, 1934.

When von Papen went to Vienna as envoy at Hitler's instigation in August 1934, he was once again part of the former Vice-Chancellor's staff. He was happy to accept this new assignment after coming to the conclusion "that in the current anti-Nazi mood at home and abroad, caused by the murder of Dollfuß, there was an opportunity to continue our old policy from Vienna through foreign policy pressure on Hitler. Our personal relations with Mussolini were the best, the Vatican was extremely worried about the violation of the concordat concluded only a year before; the voices from the East during the previous months had shown that at least in the Balkans there were starting points for our resistance activities." (Fritz Günther v. Tschirschky, "Memoirs of a High Traitor", page 217).

On February 5, 1935, Tschirschky resigned from Papen's legation in order to emigrate to England. He did not want to comply with the order of the Secret State Police to appear for questioning in Berlin because he feared the worst, as the police regretted - as he himself had learned through his connections - that he had discovered his treasonous activities too late.

In England, Tschirschky was now able to give free rein to his hatred of the new Germany without apparently even thinking about the fact that he was committing open treason.

In London, through his cousin Karl Erdmann Pückler, correspondent of the "Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung", he met Michel Leroy-Beaulieu, the future French ambassador to Costa Rica, who introduced him to Sir Campbell Mitchel-Cotts, the heir to a rich Scottish shipowner. The latter ran a large house in the most elegant quarter of London, where professors, military officers, economists, artists, high-ranking Anglican clergymen and foreign diplomats met, and where Tschirschky also met Mr. Morrison, who later became Speaker of the House of Commens and was Minister of Agriculture in the Baldwin cabinet. He also made the acquaintance of Sir

John Dill, Chief of the General Staff, Mr. Duff-Cooper, the well-known Germany-hater, and many other English personalities.

However, the fact that men like Tschirschky were not held in high esteem by the British is clear from his own painful memories: "In conversations with important people in English political and social life, it always pained me to be told: you and your group have failed with your policies.
failed. Now you are just trying to spread a completely negative attitude, even hatred, against the regime ruling in Germany."

Our entire conspiratorial clique has lacked such a fine sense of fairness in political and general character behavior in all its treasonous conspiracies.

The following incident also sheds light on Tschirschky's attitude. At the outbreak of war, the German Crown Prince and Crown Princess tried to reach their son Prince Friedrich, who had been in England since the end of 1938, via the Royal Court in Copenhagen and arrange for him to return to Germany via Denmark. "The Danish envoy in London repeatedly asked me to come to the legation. He said: 'You do know where Prince Frederick is. Please tell me so that I can pass on his parents' letters to him and comply with my king's orders. Although I understood his parents' concerns, I refused to give any information.

In this way, he managed to avoid being ordered to serve as a reserve officer in the Reichswehr in the first days of the war, when Germans were still able to leave England. He would then have had to return to Germany to avoid desertion. During the first ten days of the war in Scotland, he went from castle to castle, from village to village, under a different name every day, so as not to be reached by the order to report for duty." (Fritz Günther v. Tschirschky, "Erinnerungen eines Hochverräters", page 273ff.)

Tschirschky received a certificate stating that he was not subject to internment and could therefore move freely like any Englishman even after the start of the war. Later, however, he preferred internment when England was threatened with invasion in 1940. Although he had to sit in an internment camp until November 1944, he made it through the war unscathed and was allowed to become a German civil servant again from 1952.

Federal Chancellor Adenauer ordered his admission to the Foreign Service, where Mr. von Herwarth agreed to employ him in his department, the Protocol.

In his memoirs, Tschirschky himself says that as a farmer he was always completely independent, "naturally spoiled and not at all familiar with the most elementary worries of life". What did he care about the indescribable misery of millions of Germans who had to vegetate for years without a livelihood and without sufficient food. There is no mention of this in his memoirs!

Hitler was allowed to worry about this and the suppression of communist terror in the country with his movement, which had to mourn 3,50 dead and over 10,000 injured in just a few years. "The hope was that the 'drummer', the 'Bohemian corporal' could be used as a tool and disposed of at will.

could be used as a tool and could be got rid of at will once he had done his duty." (Hans Rothfel I s, "Die deutsche OIpposition gegen Hitler", page 71.)

Chancellor Bismarck had already had to clearly rebuke these politically naïve representatives of his class for their weak-minded and characterless behavior.

So as not to be misunderstood here: This Tschirschky is the prototype of a small minority of the German nobility, as we find quite a few of them as leaders of the July 20th conspiracy. It did not recognize the signs of the times, the emergence of the new zeitgeist for the formation of a German national community; in contrast to many members of the nobility, even the high nobility such as Prince August Wilhelm of Prussia, who marched in the ranks of German workers, the SS and SA men, and who then gave their best and last for Germany on the fronts during the war as exemplary troop leaders in every respect. On the eastern front, the author was able to experience unit leaders from the nobility who were highly revered by the troops and very popular, such as the division commander v. Scholz, who was later killed at Narwa.

Of course, the group around Tschirschky cannot claim any recognizable motives for their early resistance immediately after Hitler came to power.

The resistance from the conservative camp also included Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, former Reichsbank President and Reich Minister under Adolf Hitler, who was regarded by his friends as very headstrong. It was not for nothing that he proudly emphasized in retrospect that he had been his "own circle".

According to Hans Rothfels, he sent a confidant to Colonel General Beck "late" in 1937 to ask "whether he was prepared to take action against Hitler. Beck is said to have replied that a change in the regime was a civilian matter, but that if the civilian opposition took the initiative, the army would not miss it." (Hans Rothfels, "The German Opposition to Hitler", page 61.)

According to Rothfels, it is also indisputable for Schacht "that he had belonged to the O 3 p position from within" at least since 1936, since the conflict in his own specialist field. He was urged by the conspirators themselves to remain in office. He also took part in uprising ; plans even before his dismissal as Reichsbank president (January 1939), and his remaining as minister without portfolio (until 1943) was one of Hitler's few concessions to 'public opinion'." (Hans Rothfels, "The German Opposition to Hitler", page 61.)

Dr. Schacht is characterized in more detail by Goerdeler, who wrote about him in his last notes in prison: "He bears the responsibility for the National Social
But that does not alter the fact that he mastered the monetary, currency and banking system with artistic virtuosity, knew the laws of economics, was a brave man of character, one of the most capable minds and best patriots Germany has had since Bismarck. God grant that he may live. Then do not judge him for his ambition, for the wrong choice he made when he attacked Brüning in Harzburg in 1931 and declared his support for Hitler." (Eberhard Zeller, "Spirit of Freedom", page 82.)

In 1938, Schacht, still a member of the government, was involved with Beck, Goerdeler, Oster and Haider in plans to overthrow the Wehrmacht and, as was his nature, urged a decisive response from the Wehrmacht in the Fritsch crisis. Beck,

Oster and Canaris particularly appreciated Schacht's keenness and perspicacity, so that he was always chosen to inform the generals about the wider context of domestic and foreign policy and to give them the necessary backing for the required action. With this in mind, Schacht had met with Haider, the Chief of Staff of the Army, Field Marshal von Witzleben, the later Field Marshals von Brauchitsch and von Rundstedt as well as Grand Admiral Raeder and had made himself available for a new government.

Brauchitsch, who, like Raeder, could not be convinced of such plans at the time, forbade Schacht to visit him in August 1939. (Eberhard Zeller, "Geist der Freiheit", page 81 f.)

Dr. Schacht went far beyond this highly treasonous activity when he no longer shrank back from treasonous conspiracies with the potential enemy of the country. In the summer of 1938, when things were coming to a head in Germany over the Sudeten question, he made an unsuccessful attempt to exploit his connection with his British "colleague", Montagu Norman, then Governor of the Bank of England. He asked him "whether it was not possible to activate English policy somewhat more positively in the sense of his efforts to maintain peace. So far, English policy had given the impression that it was prepared to give Hitler a free hand in foreign policy".

When he met Norman again four weeks later, he told him: "I have discussed your suggestion with the British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain."

"And what did he say?" asked Schacht.

"He answered me: 'Who is Schacht? I have to deal with Hitler." (Who is Schacht? I have to deal with Hitler.)" (Hjalmar Schacht, "76 Years of My Life", page 490.)

When the conspiracy at the beginning of the "drole de guerre (the so-called war)" in the West was to win over the German generals for the overthrow of the Hitler regime as a precondition for a possible peace treaty with the Western powers, Dr. Schacht wrote a letter to America to persuade President Roosevelt to mediate a just peace.

"Our generals," assures Gisevius, "had to prick up their ears when the American president intervened and personally vouched for the conclusion of a just peace. That is why Schacht wrote a letter to America, which he hoped the recipient, former BIS President Frazer, would bring to Roosevelt's attention. . .

I smuggled this letter to Switzerland, for which Oster (Admiral Canaris' chief of staff and a key figure in the conspiracy) had to arrange a trip for me. Unfortunately, it was all in vain. There was no reply from across the ocean. Inwardly, Roosevelt had already made up his mind. He was determined to burn the brown boil to the root. Consequently, the only path open to him was the one that increasingly forced him out of a mediating role until he was finally able to bring America's war-deciding power to bear." (Hans-Bernd Gisevius, "Bis zum bitteren Ende", page 172f.)

In this case, too, it became clear that the enemy's leadership was pursuing more ambitious goals than the German resistance. Roosevelt's Morgenthau Plan also made this very clear to our conspirators after the collapse of Germany.

Even during the war, Dr. Schacht could not refrain from contacting the Western Allies and informing them of the imminent German attack on Russia, a betrayal the likes of which had never before been known of Schacht.

At the Nuremberg "war crimes trial", the American assistant prosecutor, General William Donovan, stated that Schacht had claimed "to have had contact with the Allies in 1940 and later and to have worked for them. The American president had sent him a message to the effect that he would still be needed after the war . . . Donovan then went on to explain that his own organization, the OSS, had received information from Schacht during the war via third parties. Hans Gisevius, active in the German resistance, had maintained contacts with the OSS, obtained information from Schacht and passed it on to the Allies.

However, Donovan only dropped the real bombshell at the end: in 1940/41, Schacht was in contact with the American Secretary of State via Donald Heath, the then First Secretary of the American Embassy in Berlin. Donovan's letter went on to say: "We were informed of the impending German attack on Russia by Schacht via Heath.
Heath."" (Bradley F. Smith, "The Trial of the Century", page 295 f.)

Dr. Schacht had to put up with a sharp reckoning from the historian Professor Dr. David L. Hoggan, who declared in his 1974 publication "The Unnecessary War":

"Cynically, Schacht writes (in his 1968 book 'How a Democracy Dies', the author), when power was finally firmly in Hitler's hands, almost everyone in Germany wanted to go to the crib. And suddenly everyone insisted on standing loyally behind Hitler.

Schacht undoubtedly lived in the belief that it was a special virtue of his that he had joined Hitler almost two years earlier. However, concepts such as loyalty and honor were alien to him. He did not come to Hitler as an honest confessor, but was only concerned with his own promotion. Compared to Schacht, the so-called March Fallen (those who joined the NSDALP in March 1933) were models of virtue and honor.

Schacht was amused by the attempt at religious renewal, which Hans Grimm compares in some ways to a second German Reformation and which followed Hitler's appointment on January 30, 1933. Everything connected with Christianity was a big joke for a cynical Freemason like Schacht. He recalls that the German bishops of the Roman Catholic Church enthusiastically "submitted" to Hitler's political leadership at a conference in June 1933 and that the German Lutheran bishops showed the same "servile enthusiasm" by declaring their loyalty to Hitler at their meeting in January 1934. . . " (David L. Hoggan, "The Unnecessary War", page 395ff.)

Ulrich von Hasseil, then ambassador in Rome, and Professor Dr. Johannes Popitz, Prussian finance minister, who belonged to the conservative circle of the conspiracy, drew up programs and memoranda as a basis for the time after the successful overthrow.

Ambassador von Hasseil's "Program", which was written down in January/February 1940 after detailed consultations with General Beck, Dr. Goerdeler and Dr. Popitz, stated: "Until it is possible to rebuild a normal constitutional life, the supreme power in the German Reich lies in the hands of a regency consisting of the Reichsverweser and two members. This regency appoints the ministers."

Appointment from above and not election from below largely dominated the ideas of the conspirators. In the "Law on the Restoration of Orderly Relationships in State and Legal Life", written by Popitz after discussions with Professor Jens Jessen, State Secretary Erwin Blank, Ambassador von Hassell and General Beck in the fall of 1943, the following is written about the planned State Council
the planned Council of State: "The Reich ministers and the governors are ex officio members of the Council of State. The other members are appointed by the head of state on the recommendation of the Reich government for a term of five years."

This appointed Council of State "represents the people as a whole until the consolidation of the general living conditions of the German people permits the formation of a broad-based representation of the people".

A free democratic election after the fall of Hitler was therefore just as little planned as a referendum, which the conspirators obviously shied away from. Similarly, the admission of democratic parties was not planned anywhere. On the contrary. Article 13 of the aforementioned "Law on the Restoration of Orderly Relationships in State and Legal Life" expressly states: "The formation of new political associations is inadmissible."

In his biography "Carl Goerdeler and the German Resistance Movement", Gerhard Ritter openly admits: "No one in Germany at the time would have been seriously prepared to lift a finger for the restoration of the old party system . . . he (Goerdeler) did not want to be satisfied with the conventional scheme of parliamentary democracy and did not want to be swayed by Western models." (Gerhard Ritter, "Carl Goerdeler and the German Resistance Movement", page 286f.)

On the other hand, many of the institutions of National Socialism were apparently to be adopted. Article 9 of the cited "program", which included the dissolution of the SS and the NSDAP, stated that the NSV and the Winterhilfswerk were to be taken over, the Arbeitsdienst (labor service) was merely to be restructured but retained, and the Deutsche Arbeitsfront (German Labor Front) was to be rebuilt. Moreover, it was even to be examined whether the SA, NSKK and NSFK should also be transformed.
Gerhard Ritter reports on the policy that the conspirators intended to pursue with regard to workers' problems:

"Overcoming the old class division between citizens and proletarians through a national people's community had, after all, been the real secret of Hitler's domestic political successes. Under no circumstances could we go back on this, and no one was more deeply convinced than Goerdeler of the necessity of 'making the workers joint bearers of responsibility for the state4'." (Gerhard Ritter, "Carl Goerdeler and the German Resistance Movement", page 287).

In the planned future, the Reich was also to have a Reichstag again; however, as Gerhard Ritter reports, the Reichstag deputies were by no means I ^all to be democratically elected.

Beyond these highly treacherous plans for the reorganization of the Reich after the overthrow, Ulrich von Hassell was also involved in the crime of treason.

v. Hassell, who was intended to be Foreign Minister in Goerdeler's planned government, contacted the Englishman Lonsdale Bryans in Switzerland, who knew the British Foreign Minister well and had made it his business to make contact with Hitler's German opponents from Rome in order to work for peace as long as the battle in the West had not yet begun.

The meeting took place in Arosa, during which von Hassell presented the Englishman with a written peace proposal for Foreign Secretary Halifax, asking him to give a written assurance on behalf of the British government that England not only did not wish to gain any military advantage from an upheaval in the Reich, but would also be prepared to open negotiations with a new German government immediately.

Karl Bartz reported on this process in detail: "But it is necessary," von Hassell persuaded Bryans, "that I bring something in writing to Berlin. That would convince my friends... Think what a signature from Lord Halifax would mean to my friends. It would be something solid, tangible. It would be an unparalleled incentive. It would be the moral justification for our beginning; it would carry away those who are hesitating now, and it would . .", he added, "thoroughly destroy the widespread view in Germany that England is much more concerned with the destruction of Germany than with the downfall of Hitler." (Karl Bartz, "Die Tragödie der Deutschen Abwehr", page 38f.)

Back in Switzerland from England, Bryans informed von Hassell that Halifax held him in very high esteem and agreed with his principles. But Halifax could not give a written assurance.

Now, how could the British Foreign Secretary possibly answer truthfully this crucial question posed by a German traitorous conspirator? The conspiracy, as we now know from the conspirator Gerstenmaier, has never been able to discover the true motive for unleashing the war against Germany through the many conspiracies before and during the war, namely: the defeat of the German people with its political and economic power.

The League of Nations Commissioner for Danzig, Carl J. Burckhardt, describes a conversation with the Italian Ambassador Attolico, in which the latter makes the following comments about the conspirators von Weizsäcker, State Secretary in the Foreign Office under Foreign Minister Ribbentrop, and von Hassell:

"There is a man, you know him (von Weizsäcker), who is trying to play this difficult game. . . he is doing everything with b I admirable tension . . . nobody can overrun him, the only thing that can be dangerous for him is the carelessness, the naivety and the indiscretion of the so-called conspirators. Take, for example, a man like Hasseil, he talks and rants away, he always wants to tell the English everything

and thinks they have only one interest: a strong conservative national government in Germany, possibly a monarchy, infused with ideas from Tirpitz. England would then have to show full sympathy for such a government, sympathy based on a common gentlemanly concept; all this is as stupid as the ideas of cadet pupils.... You know, Weizsäcker, he is in contact with Fritsch and Beck, with Witzleben, with Hasseil too, but if he wants to achieve his goal, he will be forced to abandon one or the other under certain circumstances. That is unavoidable." (Carl Burckhardt, "Meine Danziger Mission", page 306f.)

According to Hans Rothfels' report, von Hasseil was not successful with his conspiracies towards Roosevelt either. "In the first year of the war, he was in close contact with the American chargé d'affaires in Berlin, Alexander Kirk. When the Under Secretary of State in the State Department, Sumner Weites, came to Berlin in February 1940, Hassell tried to get Kirk to bring Roosevelt's envoy together with people other than just officials. He suggested Popitz and Planck (also conspirators, the author). But apart from a meeting between Sumner Wehes and Schacht, no contact was made with the opposition... Goerdeler had suggested in vain that Sumner Wehes should not go straight from Rome to Berlin, but first to Paris and London. There he would be so "enlightened" that he would renounce the last station of his journey." (Hans Rothfels, "The German Opposition to Hitler", page 142.)

The Foreign Office, with its diplomats all over the world, was considered the domain reserved almost exclusively for the aristocracy of the conservative camp, which, apart from the military sector, provided most of the resistance.

From the beginning of the Third Reich, the Foreign Office, headed by the then State Secretary Bernhard Wdhelm von Bülow, behaved so exclusively that the government had to create its own organ for its foreign policy outside the Foreign Office in the office of the later Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop. Hans Rothfels reports: "When this was set up in April 1934, initially with a special remit for 'disarmament issues', but with a clear tendency to take on more and more matters, Dr. Erich Kordt was assigned to the office as liaison officer. On his appointment, von Bülow (State
Secretary of the Foreign Office) instructed him not to correct Ribbentrop's errors, but to let him make his own decisions. This was certainly opposition. In the long run, however, the result was the formation of an important center of resistance in the immediate vicinity of Ribbentrop . . . The link between the AA and the Ministry of Defense was also in Nazi hands. Von Kessel . . . and von Etzdorf were entrusted with this task." (Hans Rothfels, "The German Opposition to Hitler", page 69.)

Mrs. Annelies von Ribbentrop writes: "The members of the opposition in Wilhelmstrasse neither agreed with the conclusion of the German-Polish non-aggression pact, nor did they welcome the German-English naval agreement of 1935." (Annelies von Ribbentrop, "Verschwörung gegen den Frieden", page 79.)

Erich Kordt writes about the "sham success", as this treaty was called by State Secretary von Bülow: "I took part in the conclusion of the naval treaty. Objectively, the agreement was probably in line with a tendency towards reconciliation and

understanding which, had it been pursued by Imperial Germany, might have prevented a world war. But weren't these considerations completely worthless because the result, which in itself was praiseworthy, benefited a man like Hitler?" (Erich Kordt, "Not from the files", page 113.)

These and similar considerations apparently led Kordt and his friends to work against any possible success of the Reich government simply because it "benefited a man like Hitler." (Annelies von Ribbentrop, "Verschwörung gegen den Frieden", page 79.)

At the end of 1934, when Erich Kordt, Legation Councillor of the Foreign Office, accompanied the future Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop on a trip to London lasting several weeks, he became friends with the Englishman Philip Conwell Evans, who was in close contact with the Prime Minister and was ostensibly trying to improve relations between Germany and England. Conwell Evans told Erich Kordt that Prime Minister Macdonald had asked him to visit him and explained to him, among other things: "German air armaments are increasing enormously, we cannot accept this in silence in the long term. - I am afraid we shall have to ask very seriously what that means -. I think we will have to ask very seriously what that actually means."

He had come home quite shaken by this conversation, but had done his best to dissuade Macdonald from taking this step, which, according to his knowledge of the German mentality, could have devastating consequences at the moment and make German-British understanding impossible. . .

Erich Kordt commented on this: "Here was an Englishman who sincerely
the best for Germany, but the methods he wanted to use were, in my opinion, fundamentally wrong.

When Conwell Evans had finished, I said emphatically: 'It was not right for you to advise Macdonald not to make an official inquiry in Berlin about our air armament.... Germany must be brought back to the negotiating table, but that will not happen if people in Berlin get the feeling that they can take what they like without hesitation'." (Erich Kordt, "Not from the files", page 87f.)

This was no longer just opposition within the Foreign Service, but sabotage of German foreign policy and treason!

Erich Kordt reports another betrayal of himself: "In London- dpn I met a member of Agence Havas, Pierre Maillaud. He came to see me at regular intervals to discuss political issues ... We soon got to know each other and grew to trust each other. He . . . felt, as I did, that only a change of government in Germany could secure peace in the long term . .. Most French people know Pierre Maillaud under the pseudonym Bourdan. He became one of the leading figures of the French Resistance... 193 9 was the last time we saw each other. It was not until 1946, when he was French Minister of Education, that we made contact again." (Erich Kordt, "Nicht aus den Akten", p. 162f.) According to Erich Kordt's account, until the late fall of 1938, the officials of the Foreign Office remained relatively untouched by Ribbentrop's "goings-on". One day, an official told him disapprovingly: "It seems to me that the soul of the resistance is in your room." (Erich Kordt, "Not from the Files", page 207.)

Erich Kosthorst describes that after the outbreak of the war, Legation Councillor Erich Kordt, then head of Ribbentrop's ministerial office, carried out a reorganization of the diplomatic resistance group adapted to the situation of the war in agreement with the co-conspirator von Weizsäcker, State Secretary of the Foreign Office, since April 1938 von Bülow's successor.

"He was assigned conspiratorial tasks: Embassy Counsellor Theo Kordt, former German chargé d'affaires in London, to the legation in Bern; E. von Selzam to the legation in The Hague, which was headed by Count Zech; the lecturer Legation Counsellor Dr. Hasso von Etzdorf as the Foreign Office's liaison to the OKH in Zossen; the Legation Councillor Albrecht von Kessel to Colonel General von Hammerstein-Equord; the Consul General von Janson to General von Blaskowitz; the envoy Otto Kiep to the Abwehr Department; the former employee of E. Kordt, Spitzy, to Oster's staff, who headed the central department of the Abwehr. (The connection between Oster and Kordt was maintained by Spitzy's early morning visits to Kordt's apartment).

Admiral Wilhelm Canaris, head of the German Abwehr, was, alongside Goerdeler and the military head of the conspiracy, Colonel General Beck, a driving force behind the coup plans and sabotaged the foreign policy of the German Reich just as seriously as its conduct of the war.

Major General Hans Oster made Department Z of the German Abwehr, which he headed, the backbone of the entire conspiracy and did not shy away from betraying attack dates of the German Wehrmacht to the enemies of the country.

Legation Councillor von der Heyden-Rynsch, the head of the Pol IM department, and his colleague, Legation Councillor Gottfried von Nostiz, were already working in a conspiratorial capacity. The task of this office, in addition to dealing with Waffenattache matters, was to maintain contact with the Amt Ausland-Abwehr in the OKW. They exchanged information with each other. With the outbreak of war, this contact was intensified in a conspiratorial sense, daily conferences were held with Oster (central key figure of the conspiracy, the author), and very frequent meetings were also held with Admiral Canaris (head of the Office of Foreign Counterintelligence in the OKW). The aim was to constantly have an unadulterated picture of the situation, which was an important prerequisite for the fight against the regime.

Other members of the opposition in the Foreign Office were Erich Kordt's colleague, Legation Councillor Brücklmeier, and Kordt's secretary Dr. Georg Viktor Bruns.

Ambassador Bülow-Schwante worked for the opposition at the Brussels embassy, and after a visit by Goerdeler at the end of October 1939, he arranged the well-known offer of mediation by the Belgian king and the Dutch queen.

The Kordt brothers, H. von Etzdorf and Trott zu Solz must be regarded as the core of this group; E. Kordt and von Etzdorf were actively and leadingly involved in the concrete preparations for the coup d'état in the fall of 1939." (Erich Kosthorst, "Die deutsche Opposition gegen Hitler zwischen Polen- und Frankreichfeldzug", page 14 f.)

This reorganization in the Foreign Office contributed significantly to the intensification of the entire resistance. Naturally, the most secret diplomatic information was also passed on to the resistance groups outside this office. Ernst von Weizsäcker and the brothers Erich and Theo Kordt (embassy counselors in London) had been in constant contact with the group of conspirators around Beck, Canaris and Oster since 1938.

Von Weizsäcker himself revealed how he assessed the Foreign Office's attitude to state leadership: "There was no group at all among the old civil servants in our office that would have seriously supported Hitler, but there was a circle of men who actively pursued the turnaround out of the deepest conviction." (Emst von Weizsäcker, "Memories", page 176.)

"As late as the autumn of 1944," according to Hans Rothfels, "Gauleiter Bohle (head of the NSDAP's foreign organization, the author) complained to Himmler that more than 600 of the 690 high officials in the foreign service did not yet have 'the right faith1'." (Hans Rothfels, "The German Opposition to Hitler", page 59.)

In view of this picture of the inner state of the Foreign Office, one must be astonished at the amount of blind trust placed in it by the state leadership. The treason, treachery and sabotage committed by this office and its diplomats abroad against German foreign policy and the German conduct of the war will be examined below in due course.

The motive for the criminal behavior of this very large resistance group can obviously only be the anxious concern to preserve their imagined privileges and the exclusivity of their social and professional status. The treatment of the Jews, the "Krista I llnacht" in November 1938 and the Commissar's order during the Russian campaign did not provide them with real motives for the conspiracy, but were merely welcome occasions to motivate their most serious crimes against the German people. Even without these incidents, she would undoubtedly have continued her plans for overthrow and treason.

A grotesque example of a futile effort to find valid motives for the entire resistance movement is the statement by Mr. Krausnick and Mr. Graml of the Munich Institute for Contemporary History, who wrote the following in the weekly newspaper "Das Parlament" of July 19, 1961: "Nothing underlines the factual and very conscious solidarity between European and true German interests, i.e., between the Western powers and the German opposition, more clearly than the fact that members of the resistance were prepared to take actions that would contribute to a diplomatic or military defeat of the dictator and thus initially also of Germany; for example, Erich Kordt, who informed the British government in the summer of 1939 of the impending conclusion of the Hitler-Stalin pact, or Colonel Oster, who revealed the day and hour of the imminent attack on Norway and the Netherlands.

Even those who were unwilling to accept such evidence of a European sense of responsibility and sublime love of the fatherland had to accept the renunciation of a German victory at a certain time, even at a time when the military situation did not exactly facilitate such a renunciation. If one considers these consequences of the abandonment of ordinary nationalism, it becomes even more understandable that in Germany resistance to Hitler could not be a matter for the average citizen, i.e. the mass of the people, but only for the rare personalities with a broad political horizon and the courage for a self-evident moral radicalism."

First of all, it must be disconcerting that there was also radicalism in the conspiracy, which, according to the resistance, was only to be found on the National Socialist side.

only to be found on the National Socialist side! Then it must be a remarkable achievement to justify treason with a sense of responsibility before a Europe that we can only hope will one day be a federation of different fatherlands, which will then consider treason just as reprehensible as it is now. But it is grotesque and at the same time an insult to the masses of our people to speak of ordinary nationalism and "sublime", i.e. "noble" patriotism on the part of the conspirators. We would rather stick to the "ordinary" patriotism of our people, which enables them to pull chestnuts out of the fire when it counts.

Because of the motive of the "unjust state", the former President of the Federal Court of Justice, Hermann Weinkauff, was asked to write an expert opinion in which he used all kinds of formal legal arguments to not only work out the right to resist, but also the duty to resist. After all, he concedes in his expert opinion that the

Nazi state cannot be denied the character of a constitutional state. Among other things, he writes:

"Sometimes the legal opinion is held that violent resistance against the National Socialist regime could not have violated the criminal provisions against high treason and treason against the state simply because the National Socialist state as an 'unstate' or as an 'unlawful state' could not have had any valid criminal law protection at all against attacks on its internal and external existence, i.e. because the criminal provisions against high treason and treason against the state enacted for its protection were per se legally ineffective.... It is true that throughout its existence the National Socialist state has constantly stained itself with the most serious injustices of its own making. . . Nevertheless, its character as a state cannot simply be denied. For it maintained a certain order of the state and social structure, which even in broad areas that did not particularly affect it politically still remained within the framework of traditional law, and this order - as far as one must go - was accepted by the majority of the people of the state as legally binding. After all, to deny the National Socialist-controlled state the character of a state for the entire duration of its existence would create a completely unbearable legal chaos that could no longer be controlled by anyone. However, every state has the fundamental right to protect itself against violent attacks on its internal and external existence through the threat of punishment for the sake of the regulatory function it performs." (Federal Agency for Homeland Service, Bonn, "July 20, 1944", page 204f.)

The formulation of the expert Weinkauff, that the order of the NS-state was accepted by the "overwhelming majority of the people of the state" does not do justice to the truth, because the overwhelming majority of the people not only offered no resistance, but on the contrary fulfilled their civic duty as soldiers, workers and civil servants, risking their lives until the last day of the war. A fulfillment of duty that could never be enforced to this extent.

Now, however, the jurist Weinkauff develops a right of resistance against the ruler on the basis of a "legal primal order", which applies independently of human and state legislation "if the ruler himself systematically threatens and destroys the lives, freedom and property of the citizens, if he forces them to work as slaves, if he exerts coercion of force and opinion and creates an atmosphere of terror, fear, threats and mendacious agitation in order to maintain his violence".

However, these many prerequisites listed by Weinkauff for a right to resistance did not exist at all, because the German people, apart from a small minority, obviously never felt in an atmosphere of terror, fear, threat or persecution during the entire duration of the Third Reich. Except during the terrible nights of bombing, when the Anglo-Saxon terror planes murdered many hundreds of thousands of women, old people and children in Germany on the orders of their governments. But even under these horrible circumstances, in which the form collapsed, the German people, even in the burning cities, remained disciplined and fanatically fulfilled their duty. At the front, millions of German soldiers performed such

outstanding feats of courage and loyalty that the world still looks at these men with amazement and admiration. The majority of them were simple workers, farmers and craftsmen. Quite a few workers and farmers wore the Knight's Cross.

If these were the results of an "accepted order", then it was a miracle!

After all, Weinkauff granted the right to restrict the basic human rights and freedoms of the people of the state "temporarily and exceptionally, only in the case of the most urgent emergency and only in the form of a general law". This situation of urgent emergency did indeed exist at the beginning of the Third Reich in the opinion of the people and their representatives in the Reichstag, and the overwhelming majority of the people accepted the restriction of certain freedoms in order to finally be relieved of the misery of mass unemployment, the threat of the terror of Bolshevism and the defamatory injustice of the hostile world of Versailles after the complete failure of the governments of the Weimar system. Just as today in the Federal
Republic of Germany, the mass of the people would gladly do without the far excessive liberalization in legal life, because it encourages terror in every respect.

The German people would certainly not have endured six years of unanimous unity until complete defeat if they had felt that they were living in an unjust state. Nor would it have occurred to any foreign government to treat the Nazi state as an unjust state. On the contrary, before the war it was greatly admired by quite a few politicians and statesmen in other European countries.

In his expert opinion, Weinkauff goes so far as to declare that even the "objectively unlawful criminal act of treason according to the new jurisdiction" does not exist, since the perpetrator would not have had the awareness that he was acting unlawfully and "did not need to have this awareness despite the strain on his conscience and his powers of cognition".

Here a lawyer shows us what one thinks one can do with formal legal manipulations and subtleties from the paragraphs on treason in our penal code, although the paragraphs on treason correspond completely to the natural sense of justice of our people. Opinions are divided here, and we will increasingly have to recognize that the German people are distancing themselves from the conspiracy to the extent that they are informed about its treason and its sabotage of their own warfare.

Despite decades of one-sided propaganda of the resistance in West German politics and above all in the mass media, it was not possible to arouse broad understanding for the conspirators among the masses of the German people, not even in retrospect. Quite the opposite. Again and again, the surviving resisters complained that the majority of the population did not recognize their motives and that the resistance was unpopular.

Contrary to Weinkauff's account, our conspirators knew very well that they were guilty of treason and sabotage.

On the other hand, hundreds of thousands of completely blameless German citizens who were persecuted by the state after the war on the basis of political and

ideological convictions alone and deprived of their personal freedom and material existence would certainly have had a right to resist. Where was the respect for the "original legal order" which, according to the expert Weinkauff, must be guaranteed by the state leadership? (Bundeszentrale für Heimatdienst, "20. Juli 1944", page 204 ff.)

Hans Rothfels, professor of history, obviously senses the dubious situation in which the entire resistance finds itself, and endeavors to give the conspirators a moral alibi by writing:

"However this may be, the leading military and aristocratic members of the conspiracy were certainly not caught up in narrow concepts of their profession and caste, they thought very broadly in those of the restoration of human and supranational values. The strongest force driving them were moral and religious impulses." (Hans Rothfels, "The German Opposition to Hitler", page 174.)

This is certainly true for some members of the resistance. But for those who, for whatever motives, as Fabian von Schlabren- dorff openly confessed: "To prevent Hitler's success under all circumstances and by all means, even at the cost of a heavy defeat of the Third Reich! ." this moral alibi collapses miserably. Anyone who betrays his own fatherland for party-political or ideological reasons can no longer be recognized as having "moral and religious impulses". A traitor to the fatherland who makes a pact with the enemy always remains a traitor to the fatherland, whether under the Kaiser, a Social Democratic Reich President or Reich Chancellor Hitler.

Attempts are being made today to blur these very serious distinctions and to give miserable traitors the gloriole of a resistance fighter. This cannot and will not succeed. In assessing the resistance, one must therefore be very careful to distinguish between the high traitors who mistakenly hoped to save Germany from collapse after Hitler's fall, and those numerous traitors in the resistance, starting with Hans Oster, who set themselves outside the law, morality and decency out of political opposition.

An authoritative historian of the German resistance, Gerhard Ritter, sensed what was at stake when he wrote: "The fact that Oster did not want to harm his Germany, but to benefit it, needs no discussion. But did he not knowingly harm the German Wehrmacht by putting it in much greater danger? Did not the next duty, that against his own people, his own comrades, precede that against foreign nations? That it should not be violated, under any circumstances, was in fact the unanimous conviction of most resistance fighters outside the communist groups. That is why they never wanted to know anything about sabotage and gave their all for the success of the German Wehrmacht - even though they knew that every victory on the battlefields and in the air was a new strengthening of the authority and power of the Nazi regime.

strengthened the authority and power of the tyrant. Many of them, when they heard of it, condemned Oster's deed in the strongest terms." (Gerhard Ritter, "Carl Goerdeler and the German Resistance Movement", page 270.)

In stark contrast to Weinkauff's and Rothfels' controversial views, there are, significantly, foreign historians who come to completely different conclusions, such as the American professor David Hogan, who explains in his work "The Unnecessary War": " ... if conditions had arisen in their countries as they did in Germany in 1939, the upper classes of British, French and American society would have stood united and uniformly loyal behind such a leader as Hitler, even if he were only a mediocre leader.

In 1939, Germany was clearly and unambiguously faced with a to-be or not-to-be. But even any average upper class in these three countries would have rallied to the sacred cause of pure national survival.

The problem of the upper class in Germany, on the other hand, was an exclusively pathological problem which can never be properly evaluated by a normal criticism of the dark and overwhelming urge of two thousand years of constant conspiracy . . . In all these centuries it has been a constant rule in Germany that the greater the danger to the German nation from without, the more the German upper class has betrayed its German homeland .... .

The German upper class may have had the ability to serve Hitler well, but it lacked the character to do so." (David L. Hoggan, "The Unnecessary War", page 39f.)

Elsewhere, Professor Hoggan states: "Conspirators among the German nobility forced Germany's great emperor Henry IV to go to Canossa and humble himself before the Italian pope and to renounce Germany's national rights once and for all in the decisive investiture dispute with the pope. This surrender destroyed the growing consolidation of national unity during the Middle Ages. While England, France, Spain and Portugal quickly developed into modern institutions and national unity from the 12th century onwards, Germany was forced to wait and languish until the 19th century, which finally brought partial unification. A thousand years earlier, the brother of Hermann the Cheruscan, the glorious victor who had destroyed the army of the Roman general Varus in the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest in the year 9, served as a general in the hostile Roman army, endeavoring to divide Germany. Sixteen years after his great victory, Hermann was murdered. .

Thus it runs like a red thread through German history: Germans are defeated by Germans. This has been the usual picture since the days of the Roman Empire, the Merovingians and Carolingians, the Saxons, Franks, Hohenstaufen, Luxembourgers and the Habsburg emperors, since the Thirty Years' War, the age of Louis XIV, Napoleon I up to the German Confederation, which was then successfully brought to a temporary conclusion by one man, Bismarck, who reunited part of Germany in Versailles in 1871. . .

Thus the arc of these conspiracies in the German upper class stretches without interruption from the Roman Empire of antiquity to the present day. It springs exclusively from the unbridled anti-social egoism and exaggerated false pride of individual German aristocrats and plutocrats, with frequent exceptions only confirming the rule .... .

The German conspiratorial upper class has always been devoid of any serious patriotism. They have always lacked an Archimedean point beyond their own selfishness and self-interests. No upper class of any society in earlier times has a bleaker history of moral depravity. Yet in the seventies this upper class is once again boasting of its imaginary virtues, as it always has done. ..

The German people, for their part, have become so accustomed to the conspiracies of their own upper class over the past two thousand years that they are taken for granted as a natural law. The brutal victors of 1945, both Eastern and Western, could of course, under these circumstances, easily carry out their brainwashing, re-education and conversion of the enslaved and oppressed German people." (David L. Hoggan, "The Unnecessary War", page 6 ff.)

How another foreigner, namely a representative of the Church, judges our conspirators and their very harsh punishment by hanging or shooting, is shown by the Scottish clergyman Peter H. Nicoll, who writes in his book "England's War against Germany", published in 1963, page 501:

"On the other hand, it was a tremendous challenge for Germany to realize that, while it was literally fighting to the last breath for its existence, numerous subversive forces were at work to destroy it from within. One can understand the extreme severity with which these subversive forces were dealt with. Nor can anyone doubt that they would have fared just as badly in England if we had had to deal with them under similar external conditions."

The military group of the conspiracy

With regard to the possibility of a coup, the conspirators within the Wehrmacht had to be considered the most dangerous because they alone had the means to do so. In addition, apart from a few reserve officers, they belonged to the active officer corps, whose strict, uniform mental and character structure ensured that the secret conspiracy could remain undetected from the outside until it had to come to light on July 20, 1944 with the assassination attempt by Count Stauffenberg.

Colonel General Ludwig Beck, who openly resigned from his office as Chief of the German General Staff on August 18, 1938 out of fundamental opposition to Hitler, was regarded as the decisive military leader of the entire conspiracy. Beck and some of his friends were rightly outraged by the treatment meted out to Colonel General Werner von Fritsch and by the methods used to dump Field Marshal Werner von Blomberg.

However, the majority of the later military conspirators only turned against the Third Reich and Adolf Hitler when his luck in the war ran out. They then wanted to save what could no longer be saved, because the Western Allies repeatedly declared: with or without Hitler - unconditional surrender to the West "after the East. But they simply denied this merciless reality because it did not fit in with their plans.

A study of the relevant sources on July 20, 1944 leads to the clear realization that the Foreign Affairs/Abwehr Office in the High Command of the Wehrmacht, headed

by Admiral Wilhelm Canaris, must be regarded as the backbone of the conspiracy. His Chief of Staff, Colonel Hans Oster, later Major General, was, as we shall see, the motor, the coordinator, the manager and liaison man for all resistance groups and individual conspirators.

No other office could have been better suited as a headquarters and liaison office than this office under the leadership of Canaris, who was a master at securing and camouflaging the treasonous conspiracies up to 1944 on all sides.

Through the various departments of the office, there were connections to the offices of the state, the Wehrmacht and the party, to the military attachés abroad, to the agents at home and abroad; all the requirements for the resistance fighters to travel abroad, such as passports and foreign currency, were met, and Canaris himself, as the most senior head of office of the OKW and representative of the OKW chief, Field Marshal Keitel, also had an insight into the plans of the top military leadership of the state.

The Canaris Office was organized as follows:

Department I: headquarters of foreign espionage with the secret reporting service and the procurement of intelligence, which was forwarded to the general staff departments of the interested parts of the Wehrmacht, army, navy and air force for evaluation. The heads of this department were: Colonel H. Piekenbrock from 1937 to 1943, Colonel Georg Hansen from 1943 to 1944.

Division II: Sabotage center with the task of preparing sabotage in enemy territory, such as the destruction of ships, airplanes, factories, bridges, etc. It included the later "Brandenburg" Division, some of whose members were sent behind the front line to cause confusion there through explosions and similar actions. The leaders of this division were: Major Helmuth Großcurth from 1938 to 1939, Colonel Erwin Lahousen from 1939 to 1943, Colonel Wessel Freiherr von Freytag- Loringhoven from 1943 to 1944.

Department III: Counterintelligence, which had to fend off enemy espionage and sabotage in the Wehrmacht parts of the army, navy and air force, in the armaments industry, in the economy and in army and air force technology. As the Abwehr had no executive organs of its own, Department III worked together with the Secret State Police in accordance with an agreement and mutual delimitation of powers. The department heads were: Major Rudolf Bamler from 1933 to 1939, Colonel Egbert von Bentivegni from 1939 to 1944.

The Foreign Office Group was the headquarters of the German military attachés abroad, where all reports and messages from these military diplomats were collected. From here, they were passed on to the OKW (Keitel), the Wehrmacht headquarters (Jodl) and the Foreign Office. Leopold Bürkner was the head of this office group.

Department Z, which initially dealt with purely administrative tasks and, thanks to the energetic nature of its head, the later Major General Hans Oster, developed into an important and indispensable institution of the Abwehr for the conspiracy. It was ultimately responsible for the financial administration, the agent file, legal advice, the central file administration and the passport office. Oster extended his powers by establishing contact with the NSDAP via General of the Police Wolf Heinrich Graf von Helldorf and with the Reich Security Main Office via Criminal Director Nebe, who also belonged to the conspiratorial circle. All incoming reports and notifications passed through Oster's department, which were sorted at headquarters and forwarded to the departments of the office.

Karl Bartz characterizes Canaris in his very informative book "The Tragedy of the German Abwehr" as follows:

"Above this apparatus of 400 officers and tens of thousands of agents was Admiral Canaris, 'the little Greek1 (who had not a drop of Greek blood in his veins, but a lot of Lombard blood). . . He was regarded as benevolent and averse to violence, but only as long as he was not personally affected or his interests harmed. Then Canaris turned into a cold hater who always found ways to eliminate those he disliked by any means necessary and had no qualms about using the Gestapo." (Karl Bartz, "Die Tragödie der Deutschen Abwehr", page 18.)

It goes on to say that he was also considered opaque and difficult to pin down in his immediate environment. Although Canaris hated Hitler and the Nazi regime from the bottom of his heart, outwardly he attached great importance to a good relationship with Hitler, who understandably saw the Abwehr as an extremely important instrument and therefore removed all obstacles that stood in the way of the generous expansion of the Abwehr. Canaris certainly pleased Hitler by shielding the rearmament well, populating the whole world with his agents and flying his planes over many countries at high altitudes to photograph fortifications, harbor facilities, factories, airfields and anything else that might interest a military intelligence service.

Although he helped many Jews abroad by authorized and unauthorized means, he also managed to persuade Hitler to introduce the Jewish star for reasons of alleged espionage danger, although Goebbels and all other ministries, party, police and Wehrmacht departments expressed grave reservations about this in joint conferences. (Karl Bartz, "Die Tragödie der Deutschen Abwehr", page 95.)

Canaris must have realized that the introduction of the Jewish star would further fuel foreign agitation against the Third Reich, a burden that he ultimately wanted.

Walter Hagen, alias Dr. Wilhelm Höttl, who was active in the German foreign secret service during the war and had insight into the areas of the highest offices, gives a similar characterization of Canaris. He describes him as an oversensitive person who makes it seem incomprehensible that he could have chosen the profession of an officer at all, and who had no love for the soldierly type that has always been considered a role model for every Wehrmacht: the brave, dashing and highly decorated officer and soldier. If an officer decorated with the Knight's Cross came to him with a request, he could simply refuse without considering the facts of the case, whereas he was open to people who made a non-soldierly, non-military impression on him without reservation.

This unusual characteristic of the admiral for an active officer meant that not only those persecuted for political and racial reasons could take refuge in the protection of his office, but also bad characters, impostors and schemers of all kinds who pretended to be in danger from the Gestapo and thus managed to be exempted from military service through the protection of the chief of defense. If corruption scandals were uncovered, which was often the case, they were not put to rest by ruthless purges, but covered up by Canaris himself. (Walter Hagen, "The Secret Front", page 107.)

Dr. Bernd Gisevius, who was one of the most active conspirators and who, after the successful overthrow, was intended to be Secretary of State to the new head of state, Colonel General Beck, writes the following to characterize Admiral Canaris:

"It was given to Canaris by nature to mislead his opponents. Precisely because he was not the straightforward type of officer, precisely because he was somehow incomprehensible by nature, he seemed predestined for the oppositional task he had set himself. With a sharp mind, astonishing powers of comprehension, an artist in his treatment of people, his perhaps outstanding ability was that of making a fool of himself.... He was like that, as one of the leading Gestapo officers angrily but open-heartedly told one of the survivors of the final act: "He threw sand in everyone's eyes, Heydrich, Himmler, Keitel, Ribbentrop and even the Führer.1

Canaris was an artist in trivializing a correct intelligence report in such a way that it disappeared in the desert of false information, or in ripping up the counter-intelligence material presented to him in such a way that, in the end, the case officers looked quite puzzled as to how they could have come across such a false lead... Passive leadership with apparently maximum activity was the slogan he gave his confidants for the management of official business, while he himself led by example with the highest level of activity." (Hans Bernd Gisevius, "Bis zum bitteren Ende", Volume II, page 196 ff.)

What had to make Admiral Canaris the greatest danger for the German defense and the German secret service par excellence from the outset was his panic-stricken fear of German victories, which in his opinion would only postpone and worsen his own defeat, of which he was already aware.

Poor Wehrmacht and poor people who had to cope with such a chief of defense!

The Foreign Office Group under Rear Admiral Leopold Bürkner was downright hostile towards Canaris. The later head of Department III, Colonel Bentivegni, also rejected Canaris. His relationship with him
did not go beyond official matters. The head of Department II, Colonel Helmuth Großcurth, on the other hand, belonged to the resistance and undertook a trip to the front with Oster in the fall of 1939 to explore the willingness of senior officers to stage a coup against Hitler.

Lieutenant Colonel Schräder was Oster and Dohnanyi's confidant in the army department. Hans von Dohnanyi, Special Leader Major and Reich Court Councillor, came from a Hungarian family of artists and was regarded as the intellectual head of Department Z. He was a valuable help to both Oster and Canaris as a co-conspirator.

Among the Abwehr, Oster was described as a wiry man with a monocle and an unconciliatory manner. Politically, he was an old-style monarchist through and through and therefore a fanatical opponent of National Socialism.

Walter Hagen describes Oster as a man who was willing to go to any lengths to eliminate Hitler and his rule, and whose judgment was completely clouded by the blindness and excess of his hatred. He denied Oster the capacity for any

constructive task, which would have had a disastrous effect if he had ever come to power.

From January 1943, Oster, Major General and Chief of Staff to Canaris, usurped more and more authority. His Department Z ultimately managed all personnel matters of the Abwehr and kept the agent files. It was also from here that all of the Abwehr's threads went to other authorities. As he had his own passport office as well as the entire Abwehr cash office, Oster was able to organize every trip abroad. The head of the cash office, Regierungsrat Schneider, threw himself from the third floor of a building on Nollendorfer Platz because requests were made of him that were incompatible with his correct views as a civil servant.

The special circle of V-Leuten included those in Department Z, who were paid from a black, uncontrollable disposition fund. This circle included, for example, the pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer and a Major Kratochwill.

Hans von Dohnanyi from the department was married to the sister of the Bonhoeffer brothers. Dietrich Bonhoeffer's bride was a cousin of Fabian von Schlabrendorff. The V-people in this family circle had been uk-appointed by Oster, although he had no authorization to do so. Some V-Leute of Department Z were assigned to individual groups on the orders of Canaris or Oster and received all the support they needed for their mostly fictitious assignments. It was always pointed out that these people had to carry out special tasks for the Admiral or Oster. They later submitted fake reports. On one occasion, one of these reports was actually forwarded to the Wehrwirtschaftsstab, from which it came back with the following assessment

from which it came back with the following assessment: 1. completely worthless, 2. copied from a Swiss newspaper published eight days ago, 3. the V-man must be removed immediately and personally punished for fraud. The officer in charge apologized by saying: "The man is a personal informer of the admiral."

"If it was not possible to keep the V-men out of the hands of the Wehrmacht service offices in the long term, Oster transferred them to the Brandenburg* Division. These men were not required to serve there, but formed a special group that could be called upon in the event of a coup...

The incoming agent reports in the Reich went through Department Z, where they were sorted and forwarded to the various groups in the office and, after processing there, to the interested agencies outside the office. The most important reports went via Canaris or Oster to the top leadership, so that they had the opportunity at any time to change inconvenient messages, to pass them on to the army leadership as untrustworthy or to put them on hold." (Karl Bartz, "Die Tragödie der Deutschen Abwehr", page 93 ff.)

The American intelligence chief Allen Welsh Dulles, who during the war - at that time he was the European representative of the American intelligence service (Office of Strategic Services) based in Switzerland - had been well informed about the resistance in Germany by the main players in the conspiracy, Goerdeler, Beck, Dr. Gisevius and others, reported on the Canaris office: "But certain people who

held key positions in the Abwehr deliberately falsified secret reports in order to mislead Hitler... A secret intelligence service is the ideal vehicle for a conspiracy. Its members can travel around under secret orders at home and abroad without being asked much about it. Every piece of paper in the office cupboards, the names of the employees and members, the expenses, the connections with the enemy, are state secrets, even the Gestapo could not look into the activities of the Abwehr before it too was swallowed up by Himmler . . ." (Allen Welsh Dulles, "Conspiracy in Germany", page 99 ff.)

The aforementioned resister von Schlabrendorff sees Oster as the "managing director" and the "clearing house" of the resistance movement. "The fact that he was able to take on this role was thanks to his superior, Admiral Canaris. Canaris hated Hitler and National Socialism, but he felt too old to act himself. Instead, he held the protective shield over Oster and allowed the military intelligence apparatus, insofar as it was subordinate to Oster, to be used to maintain and strengthen the organization of the German opposition to Hitler and to supply it with new forces.

Oster saw his task as building a bridge between the civilian circles of the opposition and the military. . . Without military backing, the civilian forces' hands were tied . . . In this respect, our hope was based on Colonel General Freiherr von Fritsch, the head of the army command. He was anti-Nazi. Like him were Colonel General Beck . . and General Thomas, head of the military economy, were determined opponents of Hitler." (Fabian v. Schlabrendorff, "Officers against Hitler", page 25f.)

Günther Weisenborn, former member of the "Red Chapel", writes: "Oster's 'business center', which worked under the protection of Admiral Canaris, maintained direct contact with Colonel General Olbricht, head of the General Army Office in the OKW, with the Ecumenical Council of Churches through Dietrich Bonhoeffer, with the Vatican through Josef Müller and with the Kreisau Circle through Helmuth von Moltke. In addition, Oster and Canaris had their channels to the Reich Security Main Office and Göring's Research Office, which gave them timely knowledge of the intentions of their enemy, the Gestapo.

General Olbricht, in turn, was in contact with General Henning von Tresckow, Chief of Staff to Field Marshal von Kluge (Army Group Center, East), who was building up a resistance network in the army of the East . . . Generals von Witzleben and von Hammerstein both planned a special operation against Hitler (Hammerstein at the beginning of the war, Witzleben at the beginning of 1942), but without success." (Günther Weisenborn, "Der lautlose Aufstand", page 131 f.)

Dr. Gisevius writes about the working methods of the conspirator Oster: "One cannot give the admiral enough credit for how often he held his protective hand over this controversial officer, in whose anteroom it was like a pigeon loft, full of mysterious people, civilians at that, and who apparently organized a defence within the Abwehr, although as head of the organization department he was not allowed to maintain his own agents . . .

How did Oster use his key position?

It was extremely important that he sent his confidants to the most diverse places. They did not always have to be part of the conspiracy. It was enough if he could rely on them at the right moment...

Oster acted as the opposition's archivist. The collection of documents, which we began back in 1933 (!), was expanded more and more. Almost every day he sent his loyal driver Jakobs to Beck with a secret folder, starting with the foreign newspapers and the latest military news right through to the Gestapo's outrages. At the same time, he was something of a secret mail center. Many a
letters went beyond Gestapo control to the front or abroad . . . Every trip Josef Müller ('Ochsensepp' from Munich, the author) made to the Vatican filled him with joyful satisfaction. Dr. Schönfeld's and Dietrich Bonhoeffer's mediation services to the ecumenical movement in Geneva would have been inconceivable without him . . .

He occasionally described his understanding of his function within the resistance movement to me most aptly when he stood at his desk and musingly referred to the four or five telephones whose secret lines connected him to the various official offices; 'That's me; I have to provide mediation services everywhere.

Schräder (Colonel) was carefully installed by Oster as a counterintelligence officer in the main headquarters, where he spied out opportunities with rare zeal and grit, gathered information, provided courier services and countered defenses against defenses. . .

Count Moragna was stubbornly kept in his position as head of the Vienna counterintelligence office by Oster despite a constant petty war with the Gestapo. He met his fate after July 20. When the history of the Austrian freedom movement is written, the name of this Bavarian will be at the top of the list..." (Hans Bernd Gisevius, "Bis zum bitteren Ende", page 173 ff.)

The Wde rstandsgruppe around Canaris as the backbone of the conspiracy was also the main point of contact for the conspirator Ernst von Weizsäcker, State Secretary in the Foreign Ministry. "Haider and I", he writes in his "Memoirs", "took care that our traffic did not attract attention. My constant and important line of communication went through the head of the intelligence service, Admiral Canaris, who was closest to me as a naval officer and had known me the longest." (Ernst v. Weizsäcker, "Erinnerungen", page 174.)

If the Canaris office is described as the backbone of the conspiracy, this is of course not intended to incriminate the mass of the defense officers of this office (there were about 3000 officers and special leaders during the war), who fulfilled their military duty just as well as the oath-abiding members of the other offices of the OKW.

The following chapters show who, apart from those already mentioned, were among the active conspirators of the military sector, and which acts of treason and sabotage they must be charged with. The same applies to the other resistance circles discussed above.

Viewed as a whole, the conspiracy was neither ideologically nor politically unified, just as the various groups or circles were not self-contained entities. It was made up of both

It was made up of supporters of both conservative and Marxist circles, religiously of Protestant and Catholic, socially of bourgeois and aristocratic classes, with the nobility and its social circles making up the overwhelming majority. If one compares the various circles or individuals with regard to the danger to the people as a whole, it is necessary to distinguish between two groups.

The first group consisted of those conspirators who sought to overthrow Hitler with their own forces and thus limited themselves to high treason, which, as is well known, had nothing dishonorable about it, even though it must have placed a heavy burden on the country's war effort during the war. The second group, on the other hand, were conspirators who ultimately saw military defeat as the sole prerequisite for the overthrow of Hitler and therefore did not shy away from betraying all attack dates and operational plans as well as the status and development of armaments to the enemy and thus sabotaging their own war effort.

The resistance developed into this hard core of the conspiracy when the plans for a coup planned before the outbreak of war failed to achieve their goal. It is no coincidence that this hard core, determined to commit the most serious crimes, consisted mainly of people who were already filled with hatred against Hitler in January 1933 and before, such as Beck, Canaris, Oster, Goerdeler, von Schlabrendorff, von Tresckow, von Weizsäcker, Gisevius, von Hasseil, Haider, Popitz and others whom we will meet below.

The motives of these resisters must be inquired into if a true picture of the July 20th conspiracy is to emerge that serves historical truth, whereby a distinction must be made between genuine and feigned motives. The real original motive of the hard core of the conspiracy can be outlined in a single sentence: With Hitler and his movement, those reactionary-conservative circles saw forces approaching them which they correctly suspected would not stop at their state within the state, at their status with the old privileges in the active officer corps, in the diplomatic service and in the high and highest offices of the state, and would severely disrupt their cherished exclusivity.

It was inevitable that they would have to sacrifice their privileges and exclusivity, combined with arrogance and a lack of understanding for socio-political concerns, in the interests of the newly formed national community with the demand that "the common good comes before self-interest". However, this sacrifice could not be too difficult for them because it was basically a Prussian-German socialism that was diametrically opposed to materialistic Marxism, as described by Oswald Spengler in his

Prussianism and Socialism", published in 1920. This fact was also the reason why a large part of the aristocracy had joined the NSDAP and acclimatized to the Nazi state.

The true motive of that hard core of conspirators is confirmed by none other than the creator and leader of the Reich Labor Service, Konstantin Hierl, who himself was a member of the German General Staff for many years and was able to judge the inner mental state of the active officer corps from his own experience. Konstantin Hierl writes in his work "Im Dienst für Deutschland":

"Incidentally, I have come to the conclusion that the contrast in the military situation was not at all the only reason for the planned coup d'état against Hitler, nor was it probably the decisive one for the majority of the conspirators. In my opinion, it was the political attitude against the leader of the National Socialist revolution that was the more or less decisive driving force for most of the conspirator generals. It was a struggle of the 'patricians' against the plebeian tribunes of the people!"1

He went on to write: "This hatred (of Hitler) created the atmosphere in which the conspirators planned and acted. Fanatical hatred, however, usually blinds the mind and numbs the conscience. This is the only way I can explain why honorable and intelligent men went down such a disastrous wrong path." (Konstantin Hierl, "In the Service of Germany", page 145f.)

METHODS OF CONSPIRACY

Just like the lack of recognizable motives, it is the methods of the hard conspiratorial core that make the glorification of the resistance downright unbearable.

The assassination attempt on Adolf Hitler on July 20, 1944 at the Führer's headquarters in Rastenburg ended with the murder of Colonel Brandt from the Operations Department of the Army High Command, General Korten, Chief of the Air Force General Staff, General Schmundt, Hitler's chief aide-de-camp, and the stenographer Berger. In addition to Hitler, many members of the OKH and OKW were injured.

The assassin Claus Schenk Graf von Stauffenb I erg must have been aware that all 24 participants in the briefing would fall victim to his bomb attack. He could not have known that his bomb would not kill all the participants because of the nature of the wooden guest barracks in which the briefing took place - instead of the usual solid concrete bunker. So it was a case of premeditated murder, the murder of innocent people. An assassination attempt on Hitler alone was not compatible with the assassin's Christian conscience, but the murder of innocents was a reprehensible crime.

Max Domarus, an anti-national socialist historian, judges Stauffenberg's assassination attempt: "The plan underlines the fact that the assassins did not dare to confront Hitler openly. They were more willing to kill innocent people with Hitler, but they themselves wanted to stay alive. The excuse that Hitler could not have been shot with a pistol because he was always guarded by SS men does not hold water. There is unanimous testimony from those around Hitler that it would have been quite possible to shoot him on many occasions before his servants or guards could have intervened. In this case, however, the assassin's life would probably have been forfeited."

Domarus continues his assessment of von Stauffenberg: "The Count was a tragic figure in every respect, physically weakened, nervous, but undoubtedly also ambitious. In his methods, he was no different from the other assassins who had previously tried to kill Hitler. He also wanted to stay alive himself, as he wanted to become State Secretary in the War Ministry in the Go ' erdeler cabinet.

War Ministry in the Go ' erdeler cabinet. However, an assassin who is not prepared to sacrifice his own life in the actual execution of the assassination attempt does not have the necessary prerequisites for his plan." (Max Domarus, "Hitler", page 2117f.)

On March 13, 1943, the conspirators von Tresckow and von Schlabrendorff succeeded in smuggling a time bomb into Hitler's plane near Smolensk in the central section of the Eastern Front, as also reported in detail in my 1967 documentary "Der 20. Juli und der Landesverrat" (July 20th and Treason), but the detonator failed. Hitler came with an escort that included not only military clerks and orderlies but also personnel such as doctors, cooks, etc., all of whom would have been killed if the assassination attempt had succeeded; members of the escort commando who had been ordered to do their duty and certainly had no opportunity to refuse it. They would have died completely innocent.

But did these conspirators, whose morals and Christian conscience supposedly drove them to resist, ask for it?

Shortly after the failed attack in Smolensk, von Tresckow learned that on March 21, on the occasion of the Heroes' Memorial I, Hitler would visit the exhibition of weapons looted from Army Group Center after the official ceremony in the Berlin arsenal. Göring, Himmler and Keitel were also expected to accompany him. Von Tresckow immediately contacted the counter-intelligence officer of Army Group I e Mitte, Rudolf-Christoph Freiherr von Gersdorff, and asked him to carry out the attack himself. Gersdorff drove to Berlin, received the British explosives from Schlabrendorff in a hotel and lurked in front of the armory with a bomb in each coat pocket.

Gersdorff himself describes what happened next in his memoirs "Soldat im Untergang": "As I had no idea how long he (Hitler) would speak and how long the orchestra would play afterwards, it was impossible for me to set off the detonators during the ceremony. I took a Pervitin that Tresckow had given me for safety's sake * and went to the entrance of the exhibition rooms during the concluding musical recital. There I met Colonel General Model and the museum director. The three of us lined up at the entrance. I stood between Model and the uniformed museum director. However, it was quite a while before Hitler appeared . . . Hitler was accompanied by Himmler, Keitel, Dönitz, Schmundt and two or three ordinance officers. At the door Hitler suddenly turned around and said: "Field Marshal v. Bock, I ask you, as the former commander-in-chief of Army Group Center, to join us." Bock acknowledged with a somewhat exaggerated bow and entered together with his accompanying officer, Major

officer, Major of the Reserve Hans-Carl Graf v. Hardenberg-Neuhardenberg, entered the room.

I used this moment, when everyone's attention was focused on Hitler, Bock and Hardenberg, to set off the detonator of the 'Clam' clip mine in my left coat pocket. I had the other 'Clam' in my right coat pocket. But I had already raised my right arm in the "German salute" like my two neighbors. Hitler only greeted Model with a handshake. Then the tour began, with me pressing close to Hitler's left side. When I tried to explain various exhibits, Hitler obviously didn't listen at all. Even when I drew his attention to a Napoleonic eagle that German pioneers had found in the riverbed while building a bridge over the Berezina, I received no reply. Instead,

Hitler walked - or rather, ran - the shortest way in the direction of the side exit. Göring, who in the meantime had taken a look at a display case with documents and wanted to draw Hitler's attention to a patriotic appeal by the Metropolitan of Moscow, did not receive an answer either. At the exit on the side of the arsenal where the memorial stands, Hitler said goodbye to Model and me with the customary right-angled raising of his right forearm. Hitler had not spoken a word during the short walk through the exhibition and had hardly looked at anything.

After the war it turned out that the BBC had recorded the whole ceremony; the time from his entry to his exit from the armory had lasted only two minutes. In my memory it had seemed a few minutes longer. In any case, that would have been too short even for a normal ignition time of ten minutes. While I got rid of my detonator in the nearest toilet, Hitler climbed onto one of the Soviet tanks that had been set up between the armory and the memorial. They seemed to be the only thing that interested him." (Rudolf Christoph v. Gersdorff, "Soldat im Untergang", page 13 et seq.)

Another assassination plan was reported by Hitler's architect, Hermann Giesler, in his 1977 book "Ein anderer Hitler" (Another Hitler), according to which a bomb attack on Hitler was to take place on July 7, 1944 near Schloss Kleßheim near Salzburg after a demonstration of heavy weapons. Major General Helmuth Stieff, head of the organization department in the Army High Command, had been responsible for preparing this attack, as is documented by his confession during the interrogation. After the heavy weapons, Hitler was to be shown the new combat uniform of the assault units with backpack, assault rifle and hand grenades.

"According to Hermann Giesler, "three sergeants and non-commissioned officers with high decorations and the golden melee clasp had been selected for this. The intention of Major General Stieff was now to install English explosives with a time fuse in the assault pack, which certainly offered the opportunity to keep himself at a suitable distance from the detonation.

After the actual weapons demonstration, Adolf Hitler canceled the demonstration of the new combat equipment due to time constraints and a scheduled appointment. We drove back to the Berghof.

During the demonstration, however, I had noticed a small general who stood out from the rest of the military staff, important and excited. Who's that little guy? I asked the SS adjutant. That's Major General Stieff... The fact that the traitors planned to place the bomb in the knapsacks of three front-line soldiers, who were to be presented to the Führer for the inspection of a new uniform, caused true horror among the entire population as well as in Wehrmacht circles, especially among the enlisted men and non-commissioned officers." (Hermann Giesler, "Another Hitler", page 445 f.)

If all these bomb attacks had succeeded, innocent victims would undoubtedly have been mourned.

In order to justify these criminal methods after the war, the expert opinion of the former President of the Federal Court of Justice, Weinkauff, was also used. He

writes: "A further question of doubt, which does not fall solely within the period addressed by this expert opinion, should also be touched upon. It is the question of the legal implications of the fact that in the planned and executed attacks on Hitler's life, innocent bystanders, such as orderlies or airmen or officers not involved in the political events, may have had to be sacrificed. Did this make the act of resistance illegal in whole or in part? A distinction must be made here: insofar as the attacks were directly directed against Hitler, Himmler or similar persons, they were undoubtedly covered by the right of resistance even under such circumstances. The perpetrators acted here in a state of supra-legal emergency and therefore lawfully . .

However, the question is whether, in such a situation, the act can still be justified to the extent that it was not directed against the guilty but, of necessity, also against the innocent. This is an exceedingly difficult question that shows the limits of human justice. However one may answer it, even if one answers it in such a way that the act cannot be legally split up, but is rather justified uniformly by the right of resistance exercised in a supra-legal state of emergency, it is nevertheless clear that the law can no longer convincingly resolve this conflict.
can no longer be resolved convincingly by law, but only by grace, both human and divine. " (Bundeszentrale für Heimatdienst, "20. Juli 1944", page 218.)

With this, the jurist had reached the end of his formal legal quibbles and fled into the religious realm, where only praying for divine grace can help.

Well, the dead conspirators must not be denied this divine mercy, but in our earthly world, according to the will of the Creator, harsh punishment for serious crimes must remain valid law if the state, regardless of the type of constitution under which it is run, is to safeguard the life of the people.

While on July 20, 1944, the overthrow of the conspiracy by the commander of the Guard Battalion of Greater Germany, Major Otto Remer, and his unit was nipped in the bud, the resistance group in Paris led by the military commander in France, General Heinrich von Stülpnagel, had a considerable initial success on the same day.

At the instigation of General von Stülpnagel, the commander of Greater Paris, Lieutenant General von Boineburg-Lengsfeld, had alerted Security Regiment No. 1, which was under the command of Lieutenant Colonel von Kraewel, who was unaware of the attempt on Hitler's life and had been ordered to overpower and arrest the unsuspecting SD and Gestapo in the entire Paris area with his regiment's shock troops. The arrest operation was justified by claiming that the SS had staged a coup against Hitler, a ruse that succeeded in misleading the soldiers of the security regiment. Without this lie, the decisive execution of the arrest operation would hardly have been possible.

The deputy commander of Greater Paris, Major General Brehme, a 1923 recipient of the Order of the Blood, placed himself at the head of the raiding party that arrested the > first SS leaders. If this officer had known the truth, he might have acted as resolutely against the conspirators in Paris as Major Remer did in Berlin with his guard battalion of Greater Germany when he learned of the failed attempt

on Hitler's life and received orders from him by telephone to put down the putsch in Berlin.

In Paris, 1,200 SS men from the SD and the Gestapo, who were taken aback and surrendered without resistance, were imprisoned partly in the Wehrmacht prison in Fresne and partly in the casemates of the old Fort de l'Est. Among those arrested were the Higher SS and Police Leader of France, SS-Obergruppenführer Oberg, and the Supreme SS Leader of Paris, SS-Standartenfiihrer Dr. Knochen, with their staffs.

However, some of the younger SS officers had managed to escape. They alerted They alerted the commander of the Waffen-SS "Hitler Youth" division, SS Oberfiihrer Kurt Meyer, who in turn immediately informed Sepp Dietrich, commander of the "Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler", of the events in Paris. This meant that July 20th had also failed militarily in Paris, because the guard regiment, which in its mass had no idea what it was being used for, would never have been able to withstand the battle-hardened armored divisions of the Waffen SS.

Following the arrest, the summary courts were to convene quickly to try those who, in the opinion of the conspirators, had trampled on the law. It was Stülpnagel's intention that the judges should deal with the guilty quickly and mercilessly.

In his publication "Der 20. Juli in Paris", page 227f., Wilhelm Ritter von Schramm writes very frankly about the court martial proceedings: "However, these SS leaders probably knew one thing just as little as General Blumentritt (Chief of Staff of the Commander-in-Chief in the West) or Abetz (German envoy in Paris) when they made the linguistic decision that some 'incriminated persons1 would probably have been executed after a successful uprising. This must also be said here for the sake of truth and the completeness of our report: In the courtyard of the Ecole Militaire, the quarters of Guard Regiment No. 1, the sandbags were also set up at midnight, in front of which those SD leaders were to be shot who might have been sentenced to death at dawn by the intended court martial of the resistance forces. This prepared bullet trap was hastily removed in the early morning of July 21 before the troops lined up."

The lawyer Walter Bargatzky, a co-conspirator in General von Stülpnagel's staff, also reports on July 20 in Paris: "While Hitler's blood-dripping voice rang out over all the radio stations, promising terrible revenge, the Paris prison gates closed behind hundreds of SD men. Stülpnagel, two hours away by car, wrestled with Kluge (Commander-in-Chief West) for the execution. Teuchert implored Linstow to maintain the arrest until Stülpnagel returned. Only we agreed after a brief consultation: Paris had to take over Berlin's legacy. From the West, where the uprising had proceeded like clockwork, the Browns in the Reich had to receive the final fatal blow. Stülpnagel had to give the order to shoot the four top SD men, *without trial if necessary*, and open the floodgates for Eisenhower's and Montgomery's invasion troops to stream towards the Rhine together with the German units. Earlier, when we wanted to despair because the assassination attempt never came to fruition, we had talked about it, General Speidel... had won. He had

inconspicuously deployed the SS divisions on the furthest wing of the invasion front." (Walter Bargatzky, "The
letzte Stunde in Paris", page 172f., quoted from Zimmermann and Jacobsen, "20. Juli 1944", 5th edition).

Today there can be no doubt that the conspirator General Speidel positioned the Waffen-SS units in northern France in such a way that they could not hinder the coup.

Wilhelm Ritter von Schramm reports on the attitude of the SS leaders after their release:

"There was this strange Higher SS and Police Leader of France, Obergruppenführer Oberg. He was not exactly popular in the command staff, as he was also partly in the administrative staff of the military commander. But during this time he put many of his opponents to shame. He may have been stubborn in other matters, but in this case he adhered to the unwritten laws of comradely decency. It was certainly not pleasant for him that the SD had not played a very heroic role on the night of July 20, but it speaks for him that he refrained from any kind of revenge.

Oberg certainly knew more about that night than he said.

Surely he could have cooled his heels and spoiled things for some, having seen through all the connections, but obviously this was not in keeping with his character...

Oberg had called in a man like Blumentritt from the beginning and gave - whether half or fully in the picture, it is difficult to say - a confidant the chance to stake out the investigation as he needed it." (Wilhelm Ritter v. Schramm, "Der 20. Juli in Paris", page 317f.)

Thanks to the highly decent attitude of SS-Obergruppenführer Oberg, it was possible to limit the circle of conspirators arrested after July 20 to the most active ones and to spare the many confidants, including General Blumentritt, from persecution.

The methods of conspiracy used on July 20th in Paris, working with feints and deceptions, as well as the already prepared and intended execution of SS leaders by summary execution, if necessary without trial, are certainly not compatible with morality, custom and law.

When the orders for the imposition of a state of siege after the planned elimination of Hitler were written down in the summer of 1943, there was no hesitation in signing them with the signature of a person who had not been privy to them at all. "One of these orders," Rothfels reported, "was signed by Witzleben 'without hesitation4 , the other bore the name of Colonel General Fromm, who was not in fact privy to it, and then the signature of Stauffenberg." It was through this highly reprehensible method of misusing his person that General Fromm died.

Professor Rothfels is objective enough to comment on this significant event: "One cannot say that this working with fictions was a very orthodox military

procedure; it shows that little consideration was given to obstacles or personalities standing in the way." (Hans Rothfels, "The Opposition to Hitler", page 84.)

According to Dr. Hjalmar Schacht's characterization, Field Marshal Erwin von Witzleben was "a straight, upright officer, a born and bred nobleman who detested the clumsy, half-educated Hitler as an intruder into a sphere for which he lacked everything in terms of tradition and character". (Hjalmar Schacht, "Abrechnung mit Hitler", page 18.)

The same conspirator von Witzleb ' en, however, stated in police questioning after July 20, 1944: "Colonel General Beck received me and told me that I had heard about the assassination attempt and that he had therefore decided to take command. I replied that I was shaken by this terrible attack. I could see no reason to usurp the supreme command or the government. General Beck denied this in lengthy explanations and repeatedly claimed that the Führer was dead. Then Colonel Count Stauffenberg came to show me an order that had been issued earlier. I was horrified to see that my name was on it, and I vigorously denied that this order had been issued without my knowledge and authorization. I demanded the immediate withdrawal or invalidation of the order." (From "Mirror image of a conspiracy", page 182f.)

This denial of the signature confirmed by Hans Rothfels, the failure to stand by one's own actions, certainly cannot be reconciled with "the straight, upright officer" as Dr. Schacht saw him in Witzleben.

In "Mirror Image of a Conspiracy" it continues on page 182 ff:

"Klausing (captain) and Bernadis (lieutenant colonel) were the only ones in the first hearing of the People's Court who, as junior officers, openly stood up for what they had done. Without attempting to apologize, they explained their participation by saying that they had succumbed to the defeatist influence of their superior officer Stauffenberg and the demoralizing air in Bendlerstrasse.

In view of the appearance of Stieff, Witzleb ' en and Hoeppner, Klausing concluded by declaring that if he had known what kind of men had been at the head of the plot and were to be entrusted with leading positions, he would have come to the conclusion from the outset that nothing could ever have come of a coup."

A message signed by Field Marshal von Wtz!leben as "Commander-in-Chief of the Wehr-

Macht" signed by Field Marshal von Wtz!leben to the Wehrmacht offices by teletype HOKW02165 dated July 20, 1944 read untruthfully:

"The Führer Adolf Hitler is dead. Taking advantage of this situation, a certain clique of politicians from outside the front has attempted to stab the front in the back and seize power for their own selfish ends.

In this hour of greatest danger, the Reich government has declared a military state of emergency in order to maintain law and order and at the same time transferred executive power to me along with supreme command of the Wehrmacht."

Colonel General Alfred Jodl, Chief of the Wehrmacht Command Staff in the High Command of the Wehrmacht, who was injured in the assassination attempt on July 20, gave the following verdict on the conspirators' assassination attempt, as can be read in the OKW War Diary, Volume IV, page 1500:

"I have been an obedient soldier and have seen my honor in keeping the obedience I have vowed. All those who tried to break this obedience with Mexican gangster methods deserve my contempt. Fate would have taken its course if these people had done anything to change it."

This verdict by Colonel General Alfred Jodl, who famously fell victim to the revenge justice of the international Nuremberg Military Tribunal, is spoken from the souls of all sworn soldiers.

The conspiratorial group Canaris, Oster and Dohnanyi, the backbone of the entire resistance, also employed methods that the Secret State Police were often accused of.

First of all, the case of Dr. Wilhelm Schmidhuber, who was to be liquidated by the aforementioned group because he - although an eager helper of Admiral Canaris in matters of treason against the Vatican - allegedly endangered the Office of Foreign Affairs/Abwehr through transactions in the interests of Jews, whom he smuggled from the Protectorate territories to safe foreign countries out of human compassion. Dr. Schmidhuber wanted to go abroad himself to avoid the danger of arrest, which aroused the displeasure of Admiral Canaris and his co-conspirators, as they mistrusted him and feared that he would blab secret things abroad, which could expose the Office. Karl Bartz gives an authentic and detailed account of this case in his book "The Tragedy of the German Defense".

According to this report, a meeting took place in Dohnanyi's room in the fall of 1942, attended by Oster, Dohnanyi, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Gisevius. The conversation revolved around Dr. Schmidhuber, who later learned the content of the meeting from Bonhoeffer himself when

he was allowed to spend several hours a day together with Bonhoeffer during their long imprisonment in the Wehrmacht prison in Tegel.

A certain David had been arrested at the Protectorate border, carrying a sum of 400 dollars. During his interrogation, he admitted that he had carried out his transactions with the help of a certain Schlögel, who was an informer for the Abwehr and did not deny doing business in watches, gold and paintings. During the interrogations, Major Schlögel pointed out transactions by Dr. Schmidhuber and Captain Ickrath in the interests of Jews from the Protectorate territories.

"A bottomless mess," exclaimed Oster indignantly. "The admiral is beside himself and has no thought of covering up for Schmidhuber." Gisevius agrees and is the first to suggest that Schmidhuber should be neutralized.

"The defense should protect him," Bonhoeffer says, "others are also protected!"

"The man must be eliminated, he knows too much," replies Oster unperturbed.

Horrified, Bonhoeffer explained that such methods could not be justified. "Dr. Schmidhuber has great foreign connections as Portuguese consul. He must be given the opportunity to escape."

"You are an unworldly gusher, Bonhoeffer, if we give him the opportunity to escape, he will blab everything abroad and our store would be blown open in no time."

Bonhoeffer disagrees: "I think that's impossible. I know Dr. Schmidhuber. He's a man who likes to live and let live and wants to be left alone. I know him from my time in Munich. He will remain silent under all circumstances."

"You're completely wrong," Oster replies vehemently. "He'll bring us all to the gallows; let him go abroad first. He knows too much. Where is he at the moment, Mr. von Dohnanyi?"

"I don't know, Colonel."

(Mrs. von Dohnanyi says about the intention to eliminate Schmidhuber that her husband was absolutely against this plan and for this reason he had also refused to give the consul's address).

"That can easily be ascertained from the card index," Oster continues. "The Admiral is also of the opinion that this dangerous man must be eliminated. Who is of a different opinion?"

Everyone is silent. Only Bonhoeffer speaks up again: "In the interests of the defense, it would be right to let Dr. Schmidhuber go abroad."

Oster contradicted him again: the admiral did not want it, and he, Oster, was also of the opinion that the only way to protect ourselves was to get rid of this dangerous man. He was not only aware of the negotiations via the Vatican.

He not only knew about the negotiations via the Vatican, but also had other insights, the improper disclosure of which could be disastrous for the entire defense. However, it was necessary to proceed with extreme caution; Schmidhuber was a sly fellow. "Dr. Müller has received the necessary instructions, he will prevent Schmidhuber from escaping." That was the end of the meeting.

When this meeting took place in the Canaris office, Dr. Schmidhuber was in Zurich, where he was warned by a gentleman not to return to Germany. This interlocutor conveyed to him the thanks of some Jews from Lisbon whom he had helped to escape. Despite a second warning, he decided to return to Germany to settle his private affairs and then leave German soil for good. When he arrived at his Munich apartment, he phoned Dr. Josef Müller and asked for a meeting, during which Müller persuaded Schmidhuber not to fly to Lisbon but to travel to Rome, where Müller wanted to see him.

The Portuguese envoy in Rome informed Schmidhuber that he had received assurances from the Italian state police that he could safely remain in Italy without having to expect extradition to Germany. Despite this assurance, Dr. Schmidhuber was arrested in Merano in the autumn of 1942. When he returned to the hotel to pack his bags for departure, he was arrested by the police as he entered the hall and taken to the police headquarters. On November 2, he was transferred from Merano to Bolzano, where he was brought before the Quaestor to protest against his arrest thanks to his energetic appearance in the Quaestura.

"You are a deserter. You can raise any objections with your compatriots, the Germans. We will extradite you to Germany," was the quaestor's reply.

The conspirators in the Canaris office were not idle, where one consultation after another had taken place regarding the action to be taken against Dr. Schmidhuber. Dietrich Bonhoeffer was called to Berlin and Dr. Müller was also summoned to the Tirpitzufer for a meeting. Canaris, Oster, Gisevius, Bonhoeffer and occasionally Dr. Müller also took part in the meetings.

It was clear that Dr. Schmidhub I er would not be covered because of his foreign exchange offense. Schmidhuber, who in repeated discussions with Dr. Müller had never made a secret of the fact that the circles, including the generals, who were necessary to eliminate Hitler and his system, would have to disappear from the scene in a new construction of Germany just as much as the National Socialists.

as the National Socialists themselves. Bonhoeffer was the only one in the group who suggested that Schmidhuber should go to Lisbon. But there were reservations about this because he would know too much.

"Then the word 'eliminate' came up. Canaris agreed. Against Bonhoeffer's determined objection, it was decided to remove Consul Schmidhuber."

Bonhoeffer protested in vain. "He had not been able to assert his opinion against Canaris, Oster and Müller," Dr. Schmidhuber later explained.

A threefold liquidation plan was drawn up. They wanted to try to make Schmidhuber disappear in Campione or shoot him "on the run" at the Brenner Pass, and finally they thought of poisoning him in the Parkhotel in Merano. This hotel was particularly suitable for such experiments because it was known that the British secret service also frequented it. The murder of Schmidhuber could be blamed on them. The defense was very sensitive in some respects, and that was where Canaris' moral reservations ended.

In the end, however, the decision was made to bring Dr. Schmidhuber to Germany.

But Schmidhuber had understood. The blow against him could only come from the defense, and he now knew what they intended to do with him. "They want to have him killed as a deserter by a court martial quickly and without causing a stir." (Karl Bartz, "Die Tragödie der Deutschen Abwehr", page 141f.)

At the Brenner Pass, Schmidhuber was handed over to the German authorities, who took him to Munich, where he was brought before the military judge. After questioning him about his activities in Italy and France, the judge reproached him for his statements to Dr. Müller that he wanted to flee to England and only come to Germany as an English high commissioner. Schmidhuber denied having said this, whereupon the judge told him that a criminal case had become a political one. Dr. Müller's tip-off had prompted the military court to ask the Gestapo to initiate his arrest.

The Gestapo interrogating officer, however, was quite suspicious of accusations by the Abwehr and did not believe Schmidhuber's statement that he would flee to England only to return as High Commissioner. The interrogating officer reported this to his superior office, which eliminated the danger to Dr. Schmidhuber's life. (Karl Bartz, "Die Tragödie der Deutschen Abwehr", page 143ff.)

To characterize Admiral Canaris, the following cases are described, which Karl Bartz reported on the basis of information from the then

Dr. Manfred Roeder and the former Criminal Commissioner Sonderegger respectively.

In 1940, there was a case involving Major R., one of Canaris' closest collaborators. When this major was in Norway on business in April 1940, his wife went to Canaris without his knowledge to inform him of things she had learned through her connections to SS circles. She also hinted that something was not right in his office. Canaris then sent Captain Meissner to Major R. in Norway to persuade him to send his own wife to an insane asylum. The major rejected this request, flew to Berlin and reported to Canaris, who said to him: "I have questioned a higher SS leader and I now know that your wife's claim is nonsense. You must take your wife to the insane asylum. Otherwise she will cause damage here."

Major R. had his wife examined by two neurologists, both of whom declared Mrs. R. to be completely sane. The outraged wife then wrote a report on strange occurrences in the Canaris office, which she wanted to send to Rudolf Hess. Only after fierce arguments did the Major succeed in getting the report to himself, which he promised to forward to Keitel.

Mrs. R.'s letter reached Canaris via Keitel, who dismissed Major R. in June 1940 without hearing him on the grounds that "he was unsuitable as a II-C officer and generally unfit to be an officer of the Third Reich". Canaris then sent excerpts from the report to Heydrich with the request that Mrs. R. be arrested. Canaris asked for a detailed report on the course of the investigation and again demanded that Mrs. R. be committed to an insane asylum.

Later, Mrs. R. was released by the Gestapo as completely healthy with a warning.

In another case, District Administrator Firnhaber had issued the Jewish wife of Corvette Captain Gerst a Reinarian passport. "When Firnhaber was arrested for forgery and brought to Berlin, he demanded in vain that Gerst testify that Firnhaber had acted on Canaris' behalf. Canaris had the defense attorney make stalling promises, but at the same time he forbade any questioning of Gerst, and Firnhaber was convicted."

In December 1939, Canaris personally signed a serious complaint against his old acquaintance Major Pabst to Heydrich, head of the Secret State Police. As a result of this complaint, two active Wehrmacht officers were handed over to the Gestapo, although a military court was responsible for them.

In his complaint, Canaris wrote that two active officers of Wehrkreis III (Berlin) had made themselves highly suspicious of espionage. They had been under surveillance by the Abwehr for several months
and determined that the two officers were in contact with foreigners. These foreigners had long been suspected of working for enemy intelligence services. He was particularly concerned because this circle was closely connected with Major Pabst, who was well known to the Reich Security Main Office. It was known on both sides that Pabst rejected National Socialism. It was also worth mentioning that, due to his social position, Pabst had a widespread intelligence system at his disposal, which gave him access to information from the Wehrmacht, industry and

the economy. Pabst was seen as the key figure in the entire circle of suspected spies, and he, Canaris, therefore asked that the matter be pursued vigorously. In order to pave the way for the Secret State Police, the officers in question had been dismissed from the Wehrmacht.

Heydrich commissioned the Berlin Gestapo to investigate the case and arrested the named individuals, with the exception of Pabst.

The investigation revealed not the slightest indication of suspicion of espionage. They were acquaintances that had come about as a result of social events. There was no question of espionage. Major Pabst was also ruled out as a suspect. Those arrested were released and Canaris was informed of the results. (Karl Bartz, "The tragedy of the German Abwehr", page 107ff.)

There can certainly be no question of respect for the "dignity of man" and the "majesty of law", the motives for resistance often cited by the conspirators and their advocates, in these cases either!

The method with which Admiral Canaris was able to work when he was put on trial for treason after July 20, 1944 is shown by the following incident: Canaris, like his chief of staff, Major General Hans Oster, Captain Theodor Strünck and other conspirators, was imprisoned by the Secret State Police and constantly interrogated. During these interrogations, he not only denied taking part in high treason and treason against the state, which was his right as a defendant, but also denied his own signature on papers about preparations for the coup that were presented to him. Beyond that, however, he shifted all the blame onto his associates, just as he tried to place sole responsibility on his co-conspirator Hans von Dohnanyi, who had also been arrested, for the fact that many reports of German espionage arriving from abroad were falsified before they were forwarded for evaluation.

When Canaris accidentally bumped into his co-conspirator Strünck in the prison shower room, he whispered to him: "Blame it all on Oster and
Dohnanyi!" Strünck was horrified by this imposition. He was utterly dismayed and called Canaris' behavior shameless. Strünck could not believe that Canaris wanted to dump everything on his friend Oster. (Karl Bartz, "Die Tragödie der Deutschen Abwehr", page 212.)

In 1976, Heinz Höhne, editor of the weekly magazine "Der Spiegel", published an extensive 607-page book on "Canaris" with the subtitle "Patriot in the Twilight", in which the author recounts and describes the admiral's long-known acts of high treason and, above all, treasonous acts in great detail, but without arriving at a consistent and fair assessment. With over three thousand three hundred source references in his book, Höhne relies on an astonishing amount of documents and other records, but he tacitly ignores the authentic report by Dr. Karl Bartz in "Die Tragödie der Deutschen Abwehr", published in 1955, although Karl Bartz could have been very helpful to him in characterizing Canaris from his deepest nature.

Höhne clearly describes a variety of treasonous acts by the admiral and therefore cannot logically speak of the conspirator Canaris "in the twilight". As already explained, nothing is as clear as day as the sharply defined difference between high

treason, which has nothing dishonorable about it, and treason, which was, is and will be absolutely reprehensible. Anyone who tries to get around this fact, which is undiscussable among all other cultural peoples, must accept being regarded as unreliable in terms of character and attitude. While Höhne says nothing about the admiral's meeting with his co-conspirator Strünck in the prison's dueling room, he describes the final phase of the court-martial on April 8, 1945, with the confrontation between Canaris and Oster:

"When Canaris repeatedly emphasized that he had only collaborated with the conspirators as a pretense in order to uncover the putsch at the last minute, the court interrupted the trial. Thorbeck (SS judge) had Oster called again to confront Canaris.

The two ex-friends clashed vehemently when the SS judge told Oster what Canaris had to say in his defense. Outraged, Oster replied that Canaris' statement was not true and that the admiral had of course been involved in all the actions of his resistance circle. Desperate, Canaris called out: 'Let me explain to you, I only did it for show!' Then the general shouted excitedly: 'No, that's not true. I can't say anything other than what I know. I'm not a scoundrel.' Canaris was devastated. When Thorbeck asked him whether his former chief of staff was wrongly incriminating him, he said quietly: 'No'. Result death penalty." (Heinz Höhne, "Canaris - Patriot in the Twilight", page 567.)

THE WAR GUILT OF THE CONSPIRACY

The German-English relationship in the summer of 1937

What was Germany's political relationship with its environment, in particular with the strongest European power England, when Dr. Carl GoIer- deler, civilian head of the conspiracy, travelled to London in mid-June 1937 to initiate his own treasonous conspiracies there, after the conspirator Erich Kordt had already begun to sabotage the foreign policy of the Third Reich in a conversation with the Englishman Philip Conwell Evans at the end of 1934?

When Adolf Hitler became Chancellor of the German Reich, he was no longer unknown abroad. It was known that he had promised the German people liberation from the shackles and disgrace of the Versailles Dictate peace; reason enough to meet him with great mistrust, which Hitler's main foreign policy concern had to be to reduce. Since he could have no confidence in the diplomats of the Foreign Office, which was unsuccessfully following the old reactionary-conservative path, for his difficult project, he brought in the later Reich Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop as a foreign policy assistant, who had experience abroad and personal stature.

Before the First World War, von Ribbentrop had worked his way up from bank apprentice to accomplished businessman in Grenoble and London and lived as such in the USA and Canada, where he cultivated many contacts with personalities from politics and business. He earned Adolf Hitler's personal trust at the end of 1932 and beginning of 1933 through the connections he established in his home in Dahlem between Hitler and von Papen as well as other influential politicians, which ultimately led to Hitler's appointment as Chancellor.

In April 1934, Ribbentrop was appointed by Hitler as plenipotentiary for disarmament issues and at the end of May 1935 as ambassador on special assignment. In this position, von Ribbentrop succeeded in concluding the German-English naval treaty in June of the same year, which seemed to be the first hurdle on the road to German-English reconciliation.
reconciliation, which was so important to Hitler. However, Ribbentrop's efforts to conclude an air treaty with England also failed. Hitler and Ribbentrop also made a sincere and honest effort to relax Germany's relationship with France, but the restoration of German military sovereignty in the Rhineland stood in the way.

In August 1936, during the Wagner Festival in Bayreuth, to which Hitler had invited his future Foreign Minister as his personal guest, the two had a long discussion about German-English relations. Asked by Hitler about the prospects of reconciliation between the two nations, Ribbentrop was quite skeptical about the possibility, as all German offers had met with strong resistance after the conclusion of the naval agreement. However, he did not want to regard the situation as completely hopeless, as the apparently pro-German English King Edward VIII might still be able to change the minds of his politicians. Ribbentrop therefore suggested making one last attempt and appointing him as successor to the deceased German ambassador in London, Leopold von Hoesch, with the London mission instead of appointing him State Secretary of the Foreign Office. Hitler agreed to Ribbentrop's proposal and Foreign Minister von Neurath welcomed this decision.

The reception to Ribbentrop's appointment as German ambassador in London was divided. While former Prime Minister Lloyd George declared that Ribbentrop's appointment was welcomed in England, the British press was critical. To make matters worse, the pro-German King Edward VIII abdicated on December 10, 1936. At the end of 1937, von Ribbentrop analyzed the reasons why the incessant efforts for German-English reconciliation could not achieve a breakthrough in the following period of 1937 in his "Main Report London A 5522" of 28 December 1937 and in the "Conclusions" of 2 January 1938 to Hitler, both clearly and in detail.

According to the report by Mrs. Annelies von Ribbentrop, his wife, in her book "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 59, his "Hauptb ' ericht London A 5522" was not presented at the Nuremberg Trial in 1946 because it could have exonerated him. For the next few years it was kept hidden in London until it was located by the

well-known English writer David Irving in the Foreign Office, where it was allegedly misfiled. The Ribbentrop report reads as follows:

"Z. Z. Berlin, December 28, 1937.
A5522

Contents: German-English relations and the follow-up to Chamberlain's initiative.

1. For centuries, England has always fought for three principles:
1. for English supremacy at sea;
2. for the inviolability of the so-called 'low countries' (Holland and Belgium) and
3. for balance in Europe.

Re 1: Supremacy at sea in the world no longer exists. Since the naval treaty, the question of naval rivalry between Germany and England is no longer as topical as it was before the war. However, the following must be taken into account: The ratio of 100:35 in the naval treaty is calculated by the British Admiralty for the English side in an emergency with a maximum of 60% in the North Sea, as normally 40% of the English fleet must be in other waters. If the British Admiralty had to reckon with the hostility of Italy and possibly Japan, the figure would shift even more to England's disadvantage, despite the addition of the allied French fleet. In my opinion, England will not be able to count so easily on the active intervention of even a friendly American fleet in the North Sea and East Asia.

2. the so-called "low countries "4 have now been joined by France as a result of the emergence of the Luftwaffe. Strategically, the three countries of Holland, Belgium and France are therefore regarded by England today as a kind of glacis for the English defense, in accordance with Baldwin's thesis of England's border on the Rhine. In my opinion, it is an established fact that English foreign policy in Europe is bound for better or worse to that of France, which in recent years has become increasingly dependent on the Foreign Office for fear of a resurgent Germany. For this reason, England has always done everything in its power not to promote a Franco-German rapprochement, but also to prevent France from being weakened, for example by Bolshevism. According to my news, the English agent Sir Charles Mendl (long-time press attaché and confidant of the English embassy in Paris) has distributed many millions in France in the last two years, especially to combat communism. There are many French politicians today who have received bribes from him, and as a result England always has a strong hand in both French domestic and French foreign policy.

Re 3. since the seizure of power by National Socialism and since the rearmament of Germany, England has seen the possibility of a disturbance of the previous balance in Europe, which could deprive it of its role as arbiter of Europe and thus of its freedom of action and, moreover, even threaten England directly. The

unforgotten achievements of the German army in the war against the allies played a major role in this English concern. Germany is therefore regarded as the most dangerous possible opponent, as repeatedly expressed in the embassy's reporting during the year. Other possible opponents, e.g. Japan, threatened England's important interests, but these were initially only on the periphery of her empire; Italy threatened the fastest, but not the only route to her most important possession, India, but only Germany could threaten the heart of the British Empire.

II. Since the emergence of the Rome-Berlin axis and Mussolini's visit to Germany, since the concerns about the outcome of the Spanish Civil War and its unmistakable impact on the English position in the Mediterranean, since Italy joined the anti-Comintern movement and since Japan's advance in China, England's fears of a disturbance of the balance in Europe and in the world in general have increased. England now sees its East Asian possessions threatened by Japan, its sea route through the Mediterranean to India by Italy and its mother country, the British Isles, by Germany.

III. England has responded to this development first of all by its massive rearmament program and then by strengthening its allied friendship with France. Since the beginning of the year, England has continued to try to secure America as a raw materials base (cf. Runciman's trip to America). Preliminary discussions on a trade treaty, which had also begun about a year ago, have been continuing quietly and eagerly since the beginning of this year and will soon lead to regular negotiations. England's ultimate aim, however, is undoubtedly to win America back as an ally in the event of a European conflict.

IV. But the main question for England, which naturally sees the preservation of peace as the best guarantee for the preservation of the Empire, remains whether it will still be possible to come to an arrangement with Germany which will ensure world peace and maintain the European balance. It is conceivable that there are men in the English Government (that Chamberlain and Halifax are among them I must doubt, from my experience and observations) who today
no I believe in the possibility of a friendly arrangement with Germany on the following basis:

Return of some colonies and leaving open a solution of the Austrian question which could prepare a peaceful annexation, as well as improvement of the situation of the Sudeten Germans, possibly up to cultural autonomy, but otherwise a reiteration of Germany's commitment not to attack neighboring states and a commitment to solve all problems with them only by peaceful negotiation, but otherwise a clear agreement on at least a qualitative air limitation along the lines of the German-English naval treaty, e.g. by dropping bombs. For example, by banning the dropping of bombs, restricting the number of bombers, and possibly in quantitative terms by opening up and possibly limiting the budget.

This, in my opinion, would be about the maximum of what those men who believe in principle in an agreement with Germany (i.e. those who do not see in the

existence of a Germany of the so-called expansive National Socialist world view in itself an insurmountable obstacle to German-English understanding at all) imagine by an arrangement with Germany.

V. The majority of the English people today are in favor of an understanding with Germany. They would gladly give Germany some colonies and undoubtedly also understand the German desire for space in the East if this means that the English people do not have to go to war. But this primitive attitude of the British people is of little importance in shaping British foreign policy. . . I am convinced that the ruling class in England is able to underpin domestic and foreign policy decisions with propaganda beforehand in such a way that the English people would eventually go along with them (see the attitude of public opinion, press, etc. on the abdication of the very popular King Edward VIII)....

VI. The characteristic feature of the English ruling class today is still material egoism, power-consciousness and, most importantly, the will to rule and basically the heroic view of life that we also have, the same view of life that ultimately created the British Empire and maintained it for centuries. Buzzwords such as 'nation of shopkeepers' have, in my opinion, never been fundamentally applicable to the character of the English ruling class. The English ruling class today, just as in the past, will ultimately go to extremes, i.e. to war, both for its important material interests and for its position of power in the world, as long as there is a chance of winning...

VII. In the assessment of the German problem, two groups have emerged since Germany's resurgence:

a) The unconditional opponents of Germany: these ultra-conservative circles, which are joined by some from the camp of moderate conservatives and liberals of all shades, consider cooperation with Germany impossible because they see a threat to Great Britain in the new organization of German national power according to the principles of National Socialism, and because they believe that Germany, as the racially strongest nation on the continent, is the only nation that can really pose a threat to the British Empire. These enemies of Germany also include the trade union leadership of the Labour Party, which rejects the National Socialist world view and fears the possible repercussions of this world view for its own internal English positions of power, as well as the influence of Judaism, which is hostile to us, and to some extent also of English Freemasonry and the churches, which extends to all classes. Finally, and perhaps the most important factor, there is the traditional hostility of Foreign Office circles to Germany, which has remained unchanged to this day since Sir Eyre Crowe's memorandum in 1907, according to which England must never make a pact with Germany. These circles believe that the alleged policy of force of the new Germany can only be countered by the principle of force, and are therefore systematically working to encircle Germany. ...

In my opinion, these circles are also responsible for the more conspicuous gradual cooling of personalities within the government in recent years who would be prepared to negotiate with Germany, such as Lord Monsell, Lord Londonderry,

Edward VIII, etc. On the other hand, outspoken enemies of Germany, such as Duff Cooper, gained position and influence within the Cabinet. The retention of Sir Robert Vansittart and Eden as strong exponents of anti-German circles, although it had been repeatedly claimed that they were to be put to other uses, and the appointment of Hoare Belisha (a Jew) as Minister of War, should also be noted . . .

VIII. The English Prime Minister Chamberlain has been repeatedly reminded of the need for an understanding with Germany by the second group mentioned above since he took office. I have occasionally had the impression from Chamberlain that he was not influenced by his father's ideas about such an Anglo-German understanding. However, one should not put too much stock in this, because Chamberlain is hardly open to idealistic or sentimental trains of thought, but is regarded as a sober and unsentimental politician. He has

Since taking over the business, he has successively tried to enter into talks with Germany, Italy and Japan. Instead of this new tactic being successful, however, Chamb I erlain had to watch as the Rome-Berlin axis became ever tighter as a result of Mussolini's visit, the anti-Comintern triangle of Berlin-Rome-Tokyo emerged and Japan increasingly threatened British interests in China. These developments and the uncertainty and nervousness that was becoming apparent in influential circles here led Chamberlain to approve Halifax's trip to Berlin. In my opinion, the following considerations on Chamberlain's part were decisive for the realization of this visit, which Berlin regarded as uncomfortable:

a) Chamberlain wanted to find out whether an understanding with Germany was possible on a basis acceptable to England, i.e. how far the German demands went and whether England could accept them. If so, this would be Chamberlain's great success.

b) If such an understanding were not possible, Chamberlain would have provided himself with an alibi for his peace efforts before the English people with this initiative. This would be in line with the traditional English tendency to collect arguments for the question of guilt in a possible future war.

c) Chamberlain also wanted to bring about a relaxation of tensions in order to put an end to the rumors of crisis and war and thus calm the economy, which had become nervous as a result of events in the Far East, South America, etc. The idea of an easier implementation of the British rearmament program in a calm economic atmosphere certainly also played a role.

d) But it seems to me that the following train of thought also played a special role: England has for some time considered it conceivable that sooner or later Germany might be forced by internal conditions in Czechoslovakia to intervene here and also in Austria by force of arms. Such a solution, especially as far as Czechoslovakia was concerned, was to be avoided altogether if possible. If this is not possible, England, which could be drawn into such a conflict at any time by a possible intervention by France, would like to ensure that it does not begin at a time when its armament has not reached at least a certain level. We hear and read here

about 1939 as the year in which England can act more strongly. In my opinion, the time is more likely to be later, especially with regard to the British naval program. Before then, such a conflict would be just as inconvenient for England as the Italian campaign in Abyssinia the year before. That is why the Foreign Office has been doing a great deal for years to press Prague for an improvement in the Sudeten question. . .

If one asks what prospects of success Chamberlain's initiative currently has, one comes to this conclusion:

There is no doubt that an English Prime Minister can - if he wants to - make largely independent decisions in matters of foreign policy. Chamberlain may have this will, but the decisive factor is whether the maximum of concessions he wants to make to us can be reconciled with the minimum German demands. Great Britain and France should give up colonial land. In return, they want peace in Europe. Peace in Europe in the Anglo-French sense means a guarantee for Czechoslovakia and also arms limitations. As far as the Austrian question is concerned, it is not entirely impossible that, at least in London, a special arrangement in some acceptable form would not be unconditionally opposed. -The significance of the expected colonial concession is difficult to determine. If at the end of the colonial discussion an offer should emerge which would mean an immediate great economic strengthening of the Empire, it might be necessary to consider again whether we could accept, not as a quid pro quo, but do | ch at the same time certain temporary ties in Europe. I myself am skeptical about the possibility and advisability of such an approach. Because this raises the key question for Germany: Does Germany want to bind itself again legally and thus morally to the status quo in Europe for a colonial offer (which would probably be a limited one after all, i.e. perhaps a somewhat rounded-off Cameroon and Togo)? If we cannot do this in principle and an arms limitation is undoubtedly impracticable (the British themselves probably do not seriously believe in it), Chamberlain's initiative would gradually fizzle out. - Of course, a final judgment can only be made once the proposals are available. These negotiations will also be a final test of whether there are still prospects of a solution through friendly arrangements. If we realize that this is not the case - and I fear it is - but that we are only being stalled, we can prepare ourselves accordingly...

To sum up, we should not have any great illusions about the future development of German-English relations because, as the report shows, there are still significant difficulties of a fundamental nature standing in the way of lasting understanding between the two countries. The particular friendliness and warmth with which my colleagues and I have always been treated by the English recently should not, in my opinion, obscure the fact that there are currently no signs of a really significant turn in English policy towards an understanding in our interests. . . Nevertheless, it seems right to me that

our future policy will continue to be directed towards reconciliation. The Embassy will therefore continue to work constantly in the direction of German-English understanding. However, this work of understanding must not lead to our

friendships suffering as a result. With this in mind, the embassy has always treated the Rome-Berlin axis and our anti-comintern relationship with Japan as constant factors of our foreign policy in our English work, with the agreement of the embassy."

On January 2, 1938, von Ribbentrop wrote in his "Conclusions" to his "Main Report London A 5522":

"This is my view of the situation after a thorough examination of all the circumstances. I have worked for years for our friendship with England and would be happier about nothing than if it could be established. When I asked the Führer to send me to London, I was skeptical as to whether it would work, but in view of Edward VIII, a last attempt seemed necessary. Today I no longer believe in understanding. England does not want an overpowering Germany near her, which would be a constant threat to her islands. It will fight for that . . . Chamberlain has now appointed Vansittart, our most important and most tenacious opponent, to a position where he can take a leading part in the diplomatic game against Germany. Every day that in future - no matter what tactical interludes of understanding with us should be attempted - our political considerations would not be fundamentally determined by the thought of England as our most dangerous opponent, would be a gain for our enemies." (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 61 ff.)

In his memoirs, Joachim von Ribbentrop writes: "The final step in the development that had begun with the British-Polish alliance had been taken: England knew that Poland would exploit this English alliance to take ever more ruthless action against the Germans within its borders. By combining the English policy of encirclement with Polish chauvinism, the Danzig Corridor problem was loaded with the dynamite that was bound to blow up European peace one day.

There is no longer any doubt today that England would have had the opportunity in the last two days of August (1939) to eliminate the crisis and thus the danger of war by making a gesture in Warsaw. The fact that the British government deliberately did not do so shows that Britain was determined to go to war.

However, we did not know at the time that London was counting on the above-mentioned group of conspirators made up of the most important German military and political figures and hoped that this would lead to an easy victory over Germany. These conspiratorial circles therefore

a decisive role in the outbreak of the war. They thwarted all our efforts to reach a peaceful solution in the last days of August..." (Joachim v. Ribbentrop, "Between London and Moscow", page 203f.)

Prime Minister Chamberlain noted the following reflection in his diary on September 10, 1939 - a few days after the outbreak of war: , What I hope for is not military victory-I very much doubt the feasibility of that-but a collapse of the German internal front." (Keith Feiling, "The Life of Neville Chamberlain", page 418.)

While the treasonous conspiracies of the conspiracy with the enemies of the country were widely known at the beginning of the 1970s, the methods used by the conspirators to persuade their "friends of peace" in England to declare war on Germany only became visible on a large scale when the British government released the secret reports of the emissaries of the German resistance in 1938/39 to the public in 1972. It is to the great credit of the wife of Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop that she convincingly defended her husband's righteous patriotic work and justified German foreign policy in her documentary "The War Guilt of the Resistance" by disclosing and correctly evaluating those treacherous secret reports.

The larides treacherous conspiracies of the conspiracy up to the Munich Agreement

When Ribbentrop wrote his main report to Hitler at the end of 1937 with a decidedly skeptical assessment of German-English relations, the conspirator Goerdeler had already met with the Governor of the Bank of England, Montague Norman, Foreign Secretary Eden, Secretary of State Sir Robert Vansittart, Lord Halifax and Winston Churchill in the British capital six months earlier in order to report to them on the situation in Germany from the point of view of the German conspiracy in a deliberately false and distorting manner.

In his countless conversations, Goerdeler appealed for understanding for the fall of the Hitler regime, which could perhaps be expected in 1938 regardless of economic developments in the Reich. How the overthrow

would depend on the Wehrmacht, whose leading circles were still taking a wait-and-see attitude. Goerdeler interrupted a stay in London on June 20, 1937 s I to report to his co-conspirators in Berlin on his successful talks and to obtain new instructions from his friends in the army.

He told the Times correspondent A. E. Barker that his friends in the General Staff had come across evidence that the extremist wing of the party under Himmler and Heydrich was planning to assassinate Hitler. This news had prompted him to contact the commander-in-chief of the army, General von Fritsch, and urge him to "set the army in motion immediately, because the time had come for a military coup". However, von Fritsch had adopted a wait-and-see attitude because the coup still seemed too early for him. "Public opinion was not prepared, but that would soon be the case." Go I erdeler believed he recognized the dangers that could arise from this explosive German situation, but was of the opinion that "there would be no war if France and England took a firm stance".

Under these circumstances, a unique opportunity for the Western powers was on the horizon and the overthrow plan could be realized. If "German-Italian policy were to take a more aggressive course, France and England would inflict a diplomatic defeat on Germany". This development could provide Germany's "moderate and military" circles with an opportunity to strike a blow against the regime. London and Paris would not take the slightest risk, as Goerdeler described Hitler's "war preparations" as a "colossal bluff". There was a lack of war material, weapons and raw materials. In addition, the quality of military equipment was poor.

Goerdeler warned not to be impressed by the size of the German army under any circumstances. Even if Hitler and Mussolini were to respond to their diplomatic defeat with military action, "military resistance could not last long". Only "Anglo-French weakness" would forfeit the unique opportunity to overthrow the systems of Hitler and Mussolini. Go I erdeler saw this as the only danger. He urged the British: "Be prepared to close the Straits of Gibraltar, or at least threaten to close them, and make it clear that you are immune to any surprise." He reminded Barker that "the Nazis have a sense of anniversaries, and three were coming up: the outbreak of the Spanish War, the assassination of Dollfuß and the outbreak of the European War in 1914". (Confidential note by A. E. Barker dated4.7.193 7; Foreign Office 371/20733, C 4882.) (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 37ff.).

Goerdeler had two detailed conversations with Vansittart, to whom he also handed over a 17-page report. He readily provided information about the situation within Germany and also confirmed the reports on the German armaments situation that Vansittart was constantly receiving. "The Foreign Office was constantly supplied with material from German conspiratorial circles via the British legation in Prague and the embassy in Berlin."

Goerdeler confirmed that the study on the German export situation had been compiled by himself in collaboration with representatives of German heavy industry, which General von Fritsch had requested at the beginning of the year in

order to counter overly optimistic assessments of the situation and to influence German army circles against the regime. Shortly before Goerdeler's arrival in London, another report had been received from Colonel Thomas, Chief of the Defense Economic Staff in the Reich War Ministry, in which the bottlenecks in the German supply of raw materials had been worked out in detail. Goerdeler confirmed that this description reflected the economic situation and explained that there were considerable difficulties in implementing the Four-Year Plan.

Goerdeler's main task was "to familiarize responsible foreigners with the 'true' situation in the Reich, and he warned them not to try to make the Hitler government look better through negotiations . . ." In his conversations with Vansittart, Goerdeler repeatedly emphasized that "nothing would be worse for Germany and Europe than an artificial German-English settlement rooted in illusions". Warlike entanglements were not imminent. Even if a military conflict threatened, the German General Staff would intervene immediately and prevent the outbreak of war. Once again he urged Vansittart to remain "patient and firm" and above all "to give the reasonable people in Germany a chance" and not to take a course that would thwart the conspirators' plans "without leading to a permanent agreement". (Memorandum, Sir Robert Vansittart, London, July 6, 1937, Foreign Office 371/29733, C 5933).

"There is no doubt that the top of the British government," as Annelies von Ribbentrop explained, "was very strongly impressed by Goerdeler's secret reports. Influenced by all the dizzying secret reports that poured in on them, they encouraged Chamberlain to authorize the Halifax trip to Germany in order to see for himself on the spot the events that Goerdeler and his like-minded friends had described to British government circles . . . "

While Ribbentrop was sent to London with the task of reaching a settlement with Great Britain

Britain, Halifax (British Foreign Minister) received completely opposite instructions for his visit to Germany. Chamberlain, who had repeatedly promised Ribbentrop his "one hundred percent cooperation" in building a German-English friendship . . . Before his departure, both Halifax and Sir Nevile Henderson (British ambassador in Berlin), who was in London at the end of October, had Eden expressly instruct them for their forthcoming talks with Hitler: "We must keep Germany guessing about our attitude. We can do no more as long as we are not strong enough to talk fracture with Germany." (Anthony Eden, "Facing The Dictators", page 509.)

As Eden's successor, Halifax continued this policy of obfuscation without restriction.... .

As soon as the British armaments program was sufficiently advanced, Germany was to be defeated. In the meantime, the Reich had to be kept guessing about Britain's real intentions . . . In a private letter from that time he confessed: "For want of powerful allies, and until our armaments are completed, we must adapt our policy to these circumstances." (Chamberlain to Mrs. Morton Prince, January 16, 1938. Chamberlain Papers, quoted from Colvin, Van!sittart. . . , " page 156.)

Before his exploratory visit to Germany, Halifax asked Ambassador Ribbentrop for a discussion and emphasized that "England and Germany must not oppose each other. A conflict between the two countries, whatever its outcome, would mean the end of civilization". Ribbentrop replied that he himself had held this position for years and that "there would certainly be no German who would want such a conflict". . . Halifax's commitment could not disguise the fact that London had so far been reluctant to respond to his efforts to promote Anglo-German reconciliation.

Even before the Lord Privy Seal's visit to Germany, Ribbentrop had drawn the first conclusions from his observations, in line with Hitler's foreign policy concept. Berlin now responded to British intransigence towards all of Hitler's and Ribbentrop's efforts to reconcile existing differences with England and the encirclement efforts emanating from London with a hedging policy, which found its clear expression in the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo triangle. In Ribbentrop, London had found an extremely critical observer and opponent. Even before his departure for Rome, where he signed Italy's instrument of accession to the Anti-Comintem Pact in November 1937, the British embassy councillor in Berlin, Sir Og ; ilvie-
Forbes, echoed these fears to Daily Telegraph journalists. He complained about Ribbentrop carrying out "such things" as the Anti-Comintern Pact. The latter would "wonder at his return". In English circles, "his behavior can only be explained by the fact that he has finished with his London activities". (Confidential report Berlin, November 6, 1937. Ribbentrop office.)

"We do not like Ribbentrop's anti-communist complex at all," admitted Sir Nevile Henderson, attributing anti-English intentions to Ribbentrop and the Anti-Comintern Pact. . . In his conversation with the British ambassador, the German foreign minister made "no secret of his dislike of Ribbentrop". According to Henderson, Neurath is said to have allowed himself to be carried away with the remark that he would not be surprised if the British government "one day declared Ribbentrop persona non grata". In his conversation with Lord Halifax, who arrived in Berlin on November 17 and was invited by Neurath to a meal en famille, the German Foreign Minister allegedly made similar remarks ...

The conspirators in Wilhelmstrasse, who soon gathered around Kordt and Weizsäcker, aimed to eliminate Ribbentrop as a knowledgeable observer of England and admonisher at Hitler's side. The concerted action against Ribbentrop was orchestrated by those circles who needed the outbreak of war to realize their putsch plans. In London, the reaction to the sabotage policy was positive. Ribbentrop had recognized the British intentions exactly. (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 41 ff.)

Ribbentrop was not called to Germany for the Halifax visit, to the satisfaction of the Foreign Office, which had been corroded by the conspiracy until the end of the war. The British ambassador Henderson did not attend the meeting either, because Hitler did not want to give the exchange of ideas with Halifax an official character. Only Neurath was present at the meeting, which took place on November 19 on the Obersalzberg and was introduced by Halifax with the words: "He and other

members of the British government were convinced that the Führer had not only achieved great things in Germany itself, but that he had also blocked the path of communism to Western Europe by destroying it in his own country. Germany could therefore rightly be regarded as the bulwark of the West against Bolshevism." His further declaration to Hitler that the status quo in Austria, Czechoslovakia and Danzig could be changed was obviously to be regarded as a hypocritical statement which was entirely in keeping with Eden's secret instructions to stall Germany and keep it in the dark about Britain's true intentions.

In London they were completely satisfied with the Halifax visit. What Chamberlain had hoped for from this visit had been realized according to the report of his ambassador in Berlin: The German moderate groups, i.e. the conspirators, had received a significant boost, and the visit had had an ameliorating effect on the broad mass of the German population, who felt no desire to go to war and were pro-English at heart. Above all, Chamberlain had gained time to improve the British armaments situation and had inspired the conspirators in Germany, their "friends of peace", to press ahead even more intensively than before with the preparations for the overthrow of Hitler and to provide material for the English propaganda in the press and on the radio for the purpose of disrupting the German people, which was going so well. All this according to the motto "divide et impera", with which the British statesmen had built up their mighty world empire without the slightest scruple. Of course, the Chamberlains and Vansittarts did not naively and uncritically buy all the many fairy tales and legends about Germany from the German conspirators, but they made the best possible use of them for their masterful propaganda of lies and atrocities.

The English politicians knew and know only too well how easy it is to influence the German people through propaganda. This German mentality is said to have been well known to Napoleon I, who was quoted as saying: "There is no people more good-natured, but also no people more gullible than the Germans. I did not need to sow discord among them. I only had to cast my nets and they ran in like shy game. They strangled each other and thought they were doing their duty. - No other people on earth is more foolish. No lie can be devised crudely enough. The Germans believe them."

British Ambassador Henderson was optimistic after Hitler's meeting with Halifax and hoped that it would usher in a new era in Anglo-German relations. But Henderson was proved wrong by two detailed dispatches from London, in which he was informed that the Hitler-Halifax discussion had given no cause to reconsider the course of British foreign policy. Chamberlain had sent Halifax to Germany to sound out Hitler, not to make positive suggestions. He had also wanted to find out whether the reports of the German "friends of peace" about plans to overthrow Hitler were really true. Now that the Halifax visit had encouraged the conspirators, there would also have been personal contacts with them. Ribbentrop was in London and could not stand in the way of Halifax's desired meeting with the German

conspirators, while the conspirators in the Foreign Office, which was still completely dominated by the resistance, were completely subordinate.
Foreign Office were completely among themselves and could manipulate at will.

When the unification of Austria with Germany took place peacefully on March 12, 1938, England had to content itself with an official protest. Chamberlain, however, took the Anschluss as an opportunity to stir up public opinion against Germany and to accuse the Reich of plans for world conquest. On April 1, 1938, the British ambassador Henderson reported that after the "shock of the annexation of Austria... Hitler's next main objective will be the settlement of the Sudeten German question, if possible on the basis of the right of self-determination, but by force if this right is permanently denied...".

The core of British policy in 1938 was to permanently refuse the promised peaceful changes to the status quo in Czechoslovakia and to push Hitler onto the offensive. At the talks between French Prime Minister Daladier and his Foreign Minister Bonnet and Chamberlain and Halifax in London on April 28 and 29, the four statesmen agreed that Britain and France were not yet sufficiently prepared for war. Nevertheless, they only spoke of a future war against Germany. It made Chamberlain's "blood boil to have to watch calmly as Germany regained a foothold in Central Europe". (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 97f.)

In this tense situation, the German conspiracy could not stand idly by. This time it was the manor owner from Hinterpommern, Major Ewald v. Kleist-Schmenzin, who introduced himself to the English agent Jan Colvin as the head of the monarchical alliance in Germany in order to report to him on behalf of the resistance. During his last years in Berlin as correspondent of the "London News Chronicle", Jan Colvin had the opportunity to get to know our political situation at that time. In his memoirs, Wnston Churchill confirms that Colvin "concerned himself intensively with German problems and maintained secret contacts with many generals".

In 1951 he published a very remarkable book about Admiral Canaris entitled "Chief of Intelligence". He gave the American edition of this book the title: "Master SPY, The incredible story of Admiral Canaris, who, while Hitler's Chief of Intelligence, was a secret ally of the British".

In the spring of 1938, Jan Colvin met the old conservatives Ewald von Kleist-Schmenzin and Herbert von Bismarck at the Berlin Casino Club,
with whom he had long discussions and who made him very familiar with members of the resistance and its activities. One of his best informants was Ewald von Kleist-Schmenzin, who had been made privy to the most secret intentions and plans of the conspiracy by Canaris and Oster at the beginning of May, which he then reported to the English agent Colvin a few hours later.

Around this time, Kleist was introduced by Canaris to the then Chief of the German General Staff, Colonel General Beck, who openly admitted "that he too needed foreign allies in order to overcome Hitler". He was apparently not yet eager

to take direct action against the National Socialists, as he wanted to wait for a decision from the Commander-in-Chief of the Army von Brauchitsch. However, he would, as he said, "act independently whenever a clearly critical situation should demand it".

"England must be a firm anchor for us if we are to weather this storm", was Admiral Canaris' statement during this conversation.

In May 1938, however, England was, by its own admission, not yet a "firm anchor" to be able to speak the tough language desired by the conspirators to Hitler, which went beyond verbal warnings. But even these could be unpleasant for Hitler, as the following incident shows: In the third week of May, rumors were spread that spoke of military exercises by the National Socialist Motor Corps and of local troop movements on the Czech border. This was followed by reports from Prague and other places, which led to the British Ambassador in Berlin, Sir Nevil Henderson, going to the State Secretary of the Foreign Office, von Weizsäcker, on behalf of his Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, to ask whether there was any truth in the rumors. Jan Colvin writes in his biography "Admiral Canaris" that Weizsäcker officially denied the rumors to the British ambassador, and adds: "But Lord Halifax in London and Vansittart next to him were convinced that now was the right moment to get Hitler firmly in hand. Warnings were openly issued in unencrypted telegrams.

'I spent most of May 211,' wrote Sir Nevil, 'delivering protests to the German Foreign Office.'Hitler seemed to have no intention of causing even civil unrest in Czechoslovakia in the second half of May. He knew only too well the current weakness of his position. Plans may have been in preparation for some dangerous action at a later date. For Hitler certainly wanted to get Czechoslovakia as quickly as possible - before the end of 1938 - and he did not want to have to mobilize specifically for this purpose. . .

Immediately after Sir Nevil Henderson's protest and after the angry denials by Hitler and Keitel, the European press published reports suggesting that Hitler had been forced to give in. The effect of these reports on Hitler was prom[pt. . England, I will never forget this!" he shouted in a paroxysm of rage. But he did not remain silent for long. On May 26, he had von Brau- chitsch come to him and gave the order to build the West Wall immediately and to increase the peacetime strength of the army." (Jan Colvin, "Admiral Canaris", page 68 ff.)

In June 1938, the British attitude to the Sudeten German question was still as Prime Minister Chamberlain had announced it in the House of Commons on March 24, namely that a conflict would probably not be limited to the powers that had treaty obligations towards Czechoslovakia. The news on the political situation sent to Oster from London by the German journalist Dr. Karl Abshagen was correspondingly positive. Abshagen assured him that the British would go to war if a general conflict arose over Czechoslovakia. This was the burning issue that must have interested the conspiracy around Beck, Canaris, Oster and Kleist. Beck wrote in his diary at the time, partly true but partly illusory: "I think it is a dangerous mistake to believe that England cannot wage a long war. England's war effort has

always been long-term, because her strength lies in the immense resources of the Empire. I am convinced that the English would decide to enter the war together with France if the Czech question were forced by the Germans But if England fights, it will not be solely to help Czechoslovakia. It will be above all to put down the new Germany, which is a troublemaker and a danger to the recognized principles of English governance - to law, Christianity and tolerance." ...

"Do you believe that England will fight if we attack Czechoslovakia?" Kleist asked me.

"I think so," I replied, "perhaps only with a blockade at first."

"I think that's true," said Kleist. "I think the English will go to war." Then he lowered his voice and whispered: "The admiral wants someone to go to London to find out. We want to make the English an offer and we also have a warning for them."

At the beginning of August 1938, Beck, Canaris and Kleist met in the office of the Chief of the General Staff. "By the British government giving in to Hitler," Beck concluded, "Britain will lose its two main allies here, namely the German General Staff and the German people.

German people. If you can bring me positive proof from London that Britain would go to war if we invade Czechoslovakia, then I will overthrow this regime."

Kleist asked him what he would regard as positive proof.

"An open promise to support Czechoslovakia in the event of war."

Beck added that a letter from a member of the British government stating their position would strengthen his, Beck's, position vis-à-vis the generals. That was the basis, Kleist told me later, when he had returned from the secret mission he had undertaken for Beck and Canaris." (Jan Colvin, "Admiral Canaris, Chief of the Secret Service", page 73 ff.)

"On August 17, 1938, Kleist flew to London, equipped by Canaris with a pack of pound notes and a false passport for good cover. In August, no one there had any idea that the Czech crisis was imminent. Parliament was on vacation. Kleist had not been at the Park Lane Hotel for long when Lord Lloyd of Dolobran appeared and quickly whisked him off to a private room at the Claridge, where they spoke in French because Lloyd did not speak German and Kleist did not speak English.

"Everything is decided, Lord Lloyd," Kleist raged. 'The mobilization plans are ready, day X has been determined, the army leaders have their orders. Everything will go according to plan at the end of September and nobody can prevent it unless England issues an open warning to Hitler. ' He added that it would be even more effective if this were done jointly with France and Russia. He then explained to him the distribution of power in Germany; the reluctance of the generals, the impotence of the civil service, the vacillation of Brauchitsch, the fear of war and the confusion among the population, the poor preparation of the armed forces, which would not be at the level of rearmament before 1943. If Great Britain would take a firm and positive stand together with France and Russia and in an open declaration place the sole responsibility for everything on Hitler, then one could hope that the generals, if

he continued to insist on his war policy, would arrest him, which would put an end to the Nazi regime." (Jan Colvin, "Admiral Canaris, Chief of the Secret Service", page 77ff.)

"After this conversation, Lloyd went to Halifax, while Kleist met Sir Robet Vansittart. Vansittart, the great German-hater and former Under-Secretary of State, was an adviser to the Foreign Office under Chamberlain. Vansittart told me (Jan Colvin) that Kleist immediately began to speak with complete candor. He said that war was inevitable if we did not prevent it. I said: 'You mean there is great danger? great danger?" He replied: "I don't mean great danger, I mean absolute certainty!" I said: "Are you saying that the radicals are going to sweep Hitler away now?" He replied: "No, that's not what I mean. There is only one real radical, and that is Hitler himself. He is greatly encouraged by Mr. von Ribbentrop, who keeps telling him that neither France nor England would do anything if it came to a decision . . . Although his influence, insofar as he uses it to encourage Hitler, has a certain significance, it is generally not strong enough to be decisive. Hitler made his decision of his own accord. All the generals of the German army with whom I am friends know it. And only they know for sure and know the date on which the mine is to explode."

Then I said: "Do you think that people like Goebbels and Himmler are not also pushing Hitler in this direction?" Mr. von Kleist replied: "I repeat that they do not count for me. Hitler made this decision on his own. . Now I said: "What about Göring?" Mr. von Kleist replied: "Goering would rather avoid a war. But he will and can do nothing to prevent it. The same applies to my friends in the army, even though they are more resolutely against war than Göring." I replied: "Do you mean all the generals?" He said: "Yes, all of them, without exception. And I also include General von Reichenau, who was previously considered the most radical daredevil of them all. They are all firmly against the war. But they will not have the power to prevent it if they do not receive encouragement and support from abroad. I have already told you that they know the date and will be forced to march on that day. "Now I said: "What date do you think it is? "He laughed and said: "But you know it. "I denied having any knowledge of it. But Mr. von Kleist said: "In any case, your Prime Minister knows it." I said I did not believe that to be the case, and added that I would like to know from him the date he had in mind, for knowledge of the date was of great importance, especially if one assumed, as he did, that the adventure could still be prevented. For in such a case a great deal depended on how much time we still had before us. Mr. von Kleist still did not seem to believe that we had no knowledge of Hitler's timetable. But when I pressed him further, he said: "After September 27th it will be too late.". . .

I asked him: "If you are really sure that the day you mentioned is the date set, by what time do you think a deterrent influence could be exerted? I mean, at what point will the preparations for the adventure be too far advanced to be possibly stopped by us?

be stopped by us? If Sieg believes that we can at all." He replied: "I think you could still stop it by the middle of September. But it would be safer to intervene before the party congress."

I replied: "What means would you consider promising?" He said: "There are two. First, since Hitler now believes that the attitude of France and England in May was pure bluff, you would have to convince him that this is not the case. "I interrupted him: 'The French have announced their intentions at least half a dozen times on public occasions. And our Prime Minister spoke very clearly in the House of Commons on March 24." He objected: 'That's not good enough. Those impressions have evaporated. Moreover, as I have already told you, Ribbentrop keeps telling him that he knows from a reliable source that England and France will do nothing. "Now I asked: "What is your second means?" He said: 'A large part of the people have said yes to the present regime.... I have already told you that the army, including Reichenau, is against it; it only needs some support."

Vansittart gave Kleist some hope that England would take a firm stand. He promised a British and French naval demonstration in the Mediterranean, which would awaken in Mussolini the desire to play the role of mediator, an idea which might also fizzle out without effect. He inquired about the plans and intentions of the secret resistance movement that Kleist represented. The Junker pressed for an explanation or a letter from the British government to the German General Staff." (Jan Colvin, "Admiral Canaris, Chief of the Secret Service", page 81 ff.)

According to Vansittart, Kleist visited Churchill at his home in Kent. According to Colvin's report, Kleist got on well with Churchill, who, although not in the government, was in constant contact with the British Foreign Secretary Halifax. It was Halifax who recommended that Churchill write Kleist the desired letter, which was addressed to the German generals. Churchill wrote verbatim: "I implore you to be clear on one point: a war like this, once begun, must be fought to the last, bitter end. And you must not consider what may happen in the first few months, but where we shall all be at the end of the third or fourth year. It would be a great mistake to imagine that the bloodshed among the civilian population caused by the air raids could prevent the Empire from developing its full war potential, although we shall have to suffer more at the beginning than in the previous war. It is clear that all the great nations that become involved in this struggle, once it has begun, will fight to victory or death."

After his return from England, Kleist brought this letter to the attention of his his circle of conspirators. It was written to those who could be so criminally reckless in their hatred of Hitler that they wished for war in order to get rid of him through military defeat.

When Kleist entered Canaris' office on the Tirpitzufer in Berlin, several high-ranking officers were already assembled, eagerly awaiting his report. But he wanted to report to Admiral Canaris alone, and those gathered had no choice but to leave the room.

And now Canaris was allowed to hear Kleist say the following words: "I have not met anyone in London who wants to seize this opportunity to wage a *pre-emptive war*. I have the impression that they want to avoid war this year at all costs. But even without wanting to, they could slip into war. They say that under the British constitution it would be impossible to commit themselves to a situation that does not even exist."

What a great disappointment for the group of conspirators that they had not succeeded in persuading the "friends of peace" in London to wage a pre-emptive war, since it was in the highest interests of both sides to remove Hitler's government. How could the magnanimous "offer" made by Colonel General Beck and delivered by von Kleist have been rated so low? -

Well, Prime Minister Chamberlain had to follow a plan that was solely and always predetermined by British policy. Firstly, he felt that British armaments were still too far behind and secondly, he did not yet have a clear picture of the reliability of the German general's conspiracy, which he wanted to test further before daring to strike the decisive blow against his opponent Germany, which had become too strong. In contrast to a large number of skeptical cabinet members, he, like his advisor Vansittart, received the many oral and written reports of the German conspirators with open ears and eyes, who were not responsible to the state for their people and country and considered the preservation of peace to be their highest duty.

A common thread running through all those reports that are available in documentary form is the description of Germany's alleged military, moral and economic weakness in order to convince the British statesmen that a war against Hitler was "no great risk".

The British military attaché in Berlin, Mason-MacFarlane, reported to his Foreign Office on the lying claim by the conspirator von Kleist that partial mobilization had begun throughout Germany on August 17, 1938. The British government document center "Public Record Office" in London has given the author, among other highly

important secret reports by the conspirators and other persons, the British government's Public Record Office in London also provided the author with this report by the British military attaché, which states verbatim:

"A German, whom I have named before, and whom I will call Mr. X, came to see me again. He asserted emphatically that today (it was August 17) partial mobilization had begun throughout Germany. He named many friends who had to report for military service in East Prussia, Westphalia and Bavaria ... He said that all reservists who had served their full term in the old army, in the Reichswehr or in the Reichsheer would now be called up. In contrast, the men of the interim cohorts who had only served for a short time would not be called up. This meant that only fully trained reservists and Landwehr would be considered ...

I was surprised that he was talking about mobilization. He laughed and said that 'test mobilization' was the main issue in the whole country. He himself was convinced that Hitler was determined to act this fall. He said that he had met Hitler on previous occasions and had seen how often he lied and did not keep his promises, and that he therefore considered him untrustworthy and unreliable. He believed that nothing could prevent Mr. Hitler from waging war against Czechoslovakia.

The only hope for Europe and Germany would be a Franco-British intervention if Germany attacked Czechoslovakia. Such a war would create the conditions under which the army would be able to destroy Hitler and the party. Moderate opinion in Germany believed that France and England were giving Germany absolutely fair treatment at that moment ... He said that the mood in the country was becoming increasingly anti-regime. 240 men from the Berlin Electricity Company were reminded of their duty as reservists the next day. They celebrated this by cutting most of the cables in the main building of this company.

He also told Berlin workers on a train that had left Anhalter Bahnhof that they had to report immediately for work on the West Wall. They greeted the party officials who came to see them with shouts of 'Fie' and 'We are not slaves'. The telephone line was interrupted three times for a few minutes at dawn and many men who tried to leave were detained by the Berlin railroad police ...

Cooperation in air protection was extremely poor. Nobody asked for gas masks. In practice, air protection was limited to public enterprises and industrial plants. A major general from the German Ministry of Aviation told him that in the event of a sudden air raid

air raid, most of the population would leave Berlin, devour the surrounding countryside like a swarm of locusts, lie around by the many lakes, starve to death or die of typhus, unless the war could be brought to a rapid end by internal action against the regime.

Mr. X paid no particular attention to the recently pronounced rehabilitation of Colonel General von Fritsch."

(sgd.) F. N. MacFarlane
Colonel. Military Attache.

The report was classified and was drawn up on August 17, 1938. (Public Record Office, London, FO 371/21731.)

Kleist's lies about Hitler's alleged decision to solve the Sudeten question by force and the mobilization of German forces had once again dangerously aggravated the situation, which had calmed down again since 21 May. Chamberlain feared an upheaval in Germany, which he could not yet use for well-known reasons, and decided to settle the Sudeten crisis peacefully through personal contact with the German Chancellor.

This quite unexpected decision by Chamberlain understandably struck the conspiracy of the German generals like a bolt of lightning. Colvin reports that Colonel Lahousen, one of Admiral Canaris' first collaborators, recalled "how the admiral put down his knife and fork at dinner. He had lost his appetite. 'What! He - visiting this man?1 he mumbled in confusion at first, as if he had misunderstood. Then he repeated these words to himself, got up from the table and walked back and forth around the room. He was extremely worried and stopped eating. The tension was gone. By midnight, one half of the world was very relieved, the other half had fallen into deep melancholy. Hitler's head of the secret service belonged to the second half ... Had he made a mistake by being so open with the British? Perhaps he had driven those in London into the Berchtesgaden policy in the first place with his references to the dangers of war? Or could it be that they thought his reports were nothing more than farce or deception?" (Jan Colvin, "Admiral Canaris, Chief of Intelligence", page 89.)

Henderson had recommended Kleist-Schmenzin to London as "emissary of the moderates in the General Staff" with the remark that he considered it unwise for him to be received by official bodies.

On August 19, 1938, Henderson telegraphed his view of the current German situation in 13 points to Halifax after A. v. Ribbentrop:

Hitler wants neither war nor recourse to it as long as "the situation does not force him to do so". At the moment, he was only seeking to eradicate the impression of defeat created by May 21. Despite this conviction, Henderson advised his government to start the war *now rather than later.* In any case, "most Germans believed this"!

... This recommendation by the British ambassador in Berlin in mid-August 1938 is, as A. v. Ribbentrop aptly interprets, of the greatest importance as a contribution to the question of guilt for the Second World War, because it shows that England was already considering a pre-emptive war against Germany at that time. When Henderson adds that most Germans also considered the present moment to be better than a later one, he means only those men who had entered into the conspiracy with England . . .

After Chamberlain had forwarded a handwritten letter to Halifax on August 19 about the information from Kleist-Schmenzin, Sir Lancelot Oliphant, Sir Orme Sargent and Sir Robert Vansittart made a signed note of Chamberlain's reaction to Kleist-Schmenzin's visit: "It appears from the Prime Minister's letter that he was much impressed with what Mr. Kleist said, especially as it seems to agree with some of what Lord Hutchinson had recently said to him on his return from Germany." . ..

In a Foreign Office note, Sir R. Vansittart discusses the reliability of Kleist-Schmenzin and suggests that perhaps the officials Jebb and Breen could provide more information about the German emissary of a "small anti-Nazi clique", especially as Breen, former press attaché in Berlin, "was the facilitator of a very similar demarche shortly before the Blomberg crisis". Vansittart continues in his notes:

"Should we be persuaded that Herr von Kleist is indeed reliable and speaks for the leaders of the German army, various conclusions must be drawn. 1) That Hitler himself is determined to start the war. We sometimes believe that he would only use the threat of violence to achieve his goals, while he himself would shy away from a European war. According to this information -Kleist-Schmenzins - this is not true, but Hitler actually intends to risk war. To prevent this there is only one feasible way: Lord Runciman must put forward recommendations which satisfy all reasonable wishes of the Sudeten - such as local autonomy, minority rights for the Czechs in German areas and a plebiscite after five years, see Sir Nevile Henderson's recent letter. H. M. Government would have to submit this recommendation to the Czechoslovak Government for the commitment to be officially recognized. Such a
To make such a commitment without 'self-determination' for the Sudetes would place our Government in a very difficult position both at home and in the Dominions.

Fatally, this can only be achieved by very strong pressure on the Czechs, for we must tell them that if they do not accept the Runciman proposals, we will leave them to their fate.... . If Mr. von Kleist's information is one hundred percent correct, should not the Cabinet be instructed to take all possible measures to achieve maximum readiness for war in October? This would certainly be more impressive than the public declaration proposed by Mr. Kleist, and it would not involve the danger of encouraging the Czechs to be intransigent. And must not public opinion also be prepared? Kleist-Schmenzin emphasized the importance of His Majesty's Government issuing a declaration that went further than the one of May 21. . . If it is true that Hitler has finally decided in favor of war, we must show him that our

position of May 21 was not a bluff . . . Should we succeed in getting away with a second May 21, we would certainly weaken the regime's reputation, but it would be wrong to believe that we could topple the regime. A second diplomatic defeat of Hitler could have the opposite effect, the effect we do not want, namely the acceleration of the war. ... . We have had several such emissaries from the Reichsheer, such as Dr. Goerdeler." (FO 371/21732,20.8.1 I 938.) (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 126ff.)

In his analysis of the crisis situation at the time, Vansittart showed himself to be one of the most intelligent and consistent English politicians, who clearly stated what was important, namely the maximum English readiness for war for the moment in which Hitler finally decided to go to war. Unfortunately, however, like Churchill and the many other German-haters, Vansittart had neither the farsightedness nor the sense for the realistic assessment of Bolshevism as the greatest danger for the whole world and thus also for their empire.

Here they could have learned from the Germans, who had to make their bitter experiences with the communists after the First World War. But for centuries, their arrogance has prevented them from learning from other peoples in matters of politics.

Even today, after the loss of their world empire, it is still very difficult for them to renounce their arrogance and adapt to the new European circumstances.

Mrs. von Ribbentrop explains: "While the German conspirators, who wanted war to eliminate Hitler, repeatedly told the English
Germany was completely unprepared and far too weak for war, Henderson stated the exact opposite. Hitler did not want war, but to be prepared for all eventualities, because the intrigue of May 21 had shown him that he also had to fear the Western powers. The official German government did not appease the Sudeteners.

The situation in Germany could not be described better than Henderson does here. The permanent treason of the German resistance movement against Hitler in 1938 can be followed step by step. Henderson watched with growing concern as his government became more and more entangled in the web of German conspirators. Finally, he raised his voice in warning. Frangois-Poncet - his French colleague - was also exposed to the whispers of these circles. He later confided to his British colleague in Paris, Sir Eric Philips, that he had received 'continuous messages from army emissaries and even officers throughout August and half of September'." . . .

What Henderson recommended, namely that England should strive for honest mediation between the Sudeten Germans and Prague, Chamberlain did not want. Influenced by the German traitors, he saw the removal of Hitler as the best possible and most promising solution to the current crisis. But Henderson warned that "what is to be done with Hitler" must be kept strictly secret.

On August 19 he telegraphed again that he "did not believe in Hitler's war intentions and that Hitler had certainly not yet made his decision. Everything depended on Lord Runciman, who nolens volens had to publish the conception of a

just settlement as soon as possible, and it was in any case inappropriate to repeat the warning of May 21, 1938 officially beforehand"

Unlike Kleist-Schmenzin, who had demanded that Vansittart repeat the British threat of May 21 because Hitler thought it was just a "bluff", Henderson rejected any new May 21 because he knew that the previous threat was based on lies and had been correctly seen through by Hitler. On the other hand, he demanded "cantonal autonomy as the only possible solution, because it would still be better than a plebiscite". The fear of a plebiscite dominated the British government because it knew that the outcome would be almost one hundred percent in Germany's favor. To keep Britain from going to war, Henderson emphasized the superiority of German air defence in the Rhineland and France's inability to do anything without Britain's help. England itself could do no more than impose a blockade on Germany . . .

In the private letter of August 22, the ambassador addressed the issue that had been raised - war or no war against Germany - and posed the decisive question to Halifax.
and asked Halifax the crucial question: "Must we or must we not fight Germany again? The followers of the Crowe tradition in your Ministry have long argued that this is inevitable. I regard such an attitude as nothing less than disastrous." . . .

In this comment on Kleist's secret information, which was not intended for the Cabinet, Henderson expresses his view that in a war against Germany, which Hitler did not want and which would never be possible without British help, England would be fighting for a "bad cause" and would be on the "worst side". England had neither the "earthly nor divine right" to continue to chain the three million Sudeten Germans to the Czechs. Of course, the German army had to be prepared for all eventualities, but Hitler's decision to attack was "untrue"! Henderson, who had the embarrassing good fortune to know all sides, knew that the German conspirators were constantly over-feeding the British government with Hitler's alleged intentions to attack. The ambassador himself considered further British wars against Germany to be a misfortune, because England would then one day "be defeated herself". This has now happened, although Hitler wanted to guarantee the preservation of the Empire and was prepared to use the power of the German Reich to do so . . .

On August 30, 1938, the American Ambassador Joseph P. Kennedy visited the British Prime Minister, who told him that the possibility of war could not be ruled out. He explained to the astonished Kennedy that he had received a great deal of information that Hitler intended to invade Czechoslovakia. Several sources had suggested that he make a statement to the effect that England was determined to use force to prevent Hitler from doing so. Britain could not decide to make this declaration or threat because it was not in a position to stop Hitler due to the weakness of its air force, the weakness of France, etc. He was considering what should be done. He considered what would have to be done if "the Runciman mission failed". If Hitler attacked Czechoslovakia, he "could not be stopped, not even in other areas, and then Germany would dominate Europe". He went on to explain that the annexation of Austria had been accomplished without difficulty, but

world opinion had been aroused. He believed that if France intervened and Britain stood by it, "the United States would follow sooner or later".

Kennedy concluded by confirming that President Roosevelt was determined "to stand by Chamberlain whatever he might do" and asked only to be informed of the time when Chamberlain believed that Roosevelt should take action. (FO 371/2134, signed H. W.-Horace Wilson - Aug. 30, 1938.)

For the British government, this was a backing that had to be of the greatest importance for further action against Germany. (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page *138 ff.)*

In the summer of 1938, politicians were faced with the question of how to help the Sudeten Germans in Czechoslovakia regain their right to self-determination, which had been trampled underfoot as a result of the Versailles Peace Dictate. The British ambassador Henderson repeatedly reported to his government that Hitler wanted nothing more than to revise Versailles by means of elections in the territories concerned. An article also appeared in The Times on June 3, 1938, stating that "the Sudeten Germans have an unquestionable claim to correct an injustice such as that established by the Treaty of Versailles". Although this most authoritative English newspaper understood that the Czech government was reluctant to agree to a plebiscite that would in all probability result in the loss of the Sudeten German lands, Benesch would nevertheless be the winner in the end, as he could then have a "more homogeneous and contented people".

While the negotiations between the Czech President Benesch and the leader of the Sudeten Germans, Henlein, were still ongoing, the three-year period of service in Czechoslovakia was announced after the partial mobilization had already been carried out. In order to defuse, or at least alleviate, the crisis that continued during these weeks, Chamberlain sent Lord Runciman to Prague to find a compromise solution between Benesch and Henlein. The German government refused to comment on Runciman's mission on the grounds that it had been carried out without Germany's knowledge.

On July 18, 1938, Halifax received Captain Fritz Wiedemann, Hitler's personal aide-de-camp, at his private residence in Eton Square for a visit that had been prepared by the Austrian-born Princess Stephanie von Hohenlohe without Hitler's prior knowledge. Hitler agreed to the visit to Halifax and, at the latter's request, gave Wedemann instructions for the conversation with Halifax, which both sides hoped would shed some light on the issue of the pending Czech crisis. While Hitler had always placed all his trust in his personal aide Wiedemann, who had been his current Führer's superior during the First World War, and had treated him with corresponding care, as the latter himself confirms in his memoirs, he stabbed Chancellor Hitler in the back in a treacherous manner with the British Foreign Minister Halifax. What this messenger of the conspiracy, Wiedemann, knew to tell in London as a man close to Hitler, can be seen from the so-called Wiedemann Report

which was also read by Prime Minister Chamberlain. The report reads:

"The blow struck against Hitler on May 21 has destroyed his plans and caused complete confusion and lack of leadership at the moment in almost all offices of the German Government. Hitler is under no illusions and realizes that his defeat on 21 May has destroyed his personal authority and prestige not only among the German people as a whole, but also among his closest colleagues. He is therefore now mainly filled with a wild desire for revenge. Because of his loss of prestige, he overwhelms his closest colleagues either with brutal outbursts of rage or with a Sphinx-like silence with regard to his plans and intentions. He no longer invites his most trusted advisors to informal meetings from time to time to discuss the continuation of political developments. He now has them come to him individually to hear their views on the various problems and then dismisses them more or less politely without taking their opinions into account or making his reactions known. The result is uncertainty in all departments . . . Another consequence is that people like Goering, Himmler and Goebbels do not know what the Führer wants and what they should do . . . Typical of the current situation was the initiative of Goebbels, who in his capacity as Gauleiter of Berlin recently gave orders to the party organization of his Gau that Jewish abuse should begin again immediately, because Hitler is said to have remarked in a recent conversation that the Jews seemed to be flourishing again.

At the same time, Goering believes he is fulfilling one of Hitler's wishes when he tells his many visitors at every opportunity that it is Germany's mission to wage a heroic war as soon as possible... While the other leaders are restless and always have one eye on the Führer, they take contradictory and uncoordinated personal actions. For example, new directives are given to the press every day, often in direct contradiction to what was ordered the day before. This was particularly the case in connection with Czechoslovakia and Spain, because Goebbels had heard something, sometimes only second-hand, from a harsh remark made by Hitler in a conversation. Hess's speech in Stettin falls into the same category. It was not, as the foreign press portrayed it, written by Hitler himself, let alone approved or read by him beforehand.

This all points to an anxious groping and effort to divine the real will of the sinister Führer and calm him down before he vented his wrath in a particular direction.

in any particular direction. Under these circumstances, a number of highly placed observers are of the opinion that any political setback for the Nazi system and for the Führer himself-as long as it does not affect the German people-would have the greatest impact and could hasten the crisis that has seemed unavoidable since May 21. . . In the field of foreign policy, Ribbentrop and his officials are trying to find a way out of the rather hopeless situation by once again approaching Soviet Russia. In those circles it is stated (of course with due respect for Hitler's unpredictable whims) that today's Russian Bolshevism, which has always been branded by the

Nazi Party as a Jewish institution, is now changing more and more into Russian-style fascism. This was the result of the extensive dismissals of Jewish 'functionaries' by Stalin, and therefore there would soon be no political-philosophical obstacle to the resumption of good relations with Russia. Hitler himself has not yet decided on a policy of rapprochement with the Soviet government. At the moment he prefers to play the role of the great silent sphinx. Nevertheless, he recently received the new Soviet ambassador with unusual courtesy in a lengthy audience. Publication of this reception was forbidden to the press under threat of severe penalties. In the meantime, the new ambassador has made close contact with various offices of the Nazi Party. And in the Reich Ministry of Economics there are high hopes that petrol and grain can be imported from Russia to Berlin via Romania and the German-Romanian Petroleum Company.

Hitler had only given one concrete order since May 21, and that was on June 12 in a conversation with General Keitel, the head of the OKW. The latter informed Hitler that the armaments program would fall hopelessly short of the established plan unless the entire iron and steel capacity of German industry was in future allocated solely to the fulfillment of this program, which of course also included the Four-Year Plan... Hitler agreed to this plan and gave the corresponding order: Therefore, for example, the plan of all new highways to be built has been postponed with the exception of those of direct strategic importance for the actions against Czechoslovakia and France . . .

Furthermore, it has been ordered that the construction of the fortifications on the western border of Germany - the Siegfried Line - be completed by November 1, 1938, with the help of workers brought in from other areas ... Consequently, a large number of engineers and construction workers were called away from their jobs and sent to the western fortifications. In addition, a new 'Westgau' was established for the labor service

Dr. Otto John, president of the German secret service after the war and declared friend of the Hohenzollern Prince Louis Ferdinand, who during the war betrayed the Peenemünde V-weapons test facility and the status of the development of a German atomic bomb to the British. In 1954, he defected to East Berlin, then returned via Moscow and was convicted. Above: Dr. Otto John as President of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution in Cologne. Below: Dr. OttoJohn (center) in East Berlin with the President of the Communist National Council, Prof. Dr. Correns (left), and Dr. Girnus from the Communist Committee for German Unity (right).

Thanks to his good relations with the Vatican, Dr. Josef Müller, known as "Ochsensepp", acted as an accomplished conspirator for the Canaris-Oster conspirator group's connection to the Western Allied enemies. After the war, he was CSU Minister of Justice in Bavaria.

and 16,000 laborers were sent there. The wider Gaue '0' and 'R' were also newly founded, but their purpose is still unknown. The most remarkable aspect of Hitler's last decree are his words in which he gives the reason for these drastic orders: 'So that I am not prevented a second time from carrying out my decision at a decisive political moment, namely by the poor condition of the German army and the fighting troops'." (Foreign Office 371/21708, July 8, 1938.) (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page llOff.)

This report, which paints a completely distorted picture of the situation in Germany, shows, like all other information to the enemy, the perfection with which the conspiracy knew how to influence the alleged "friends of peace" on the other side. Again and again, their aim was to convince the British statesmen that Germany was so weak politically, militarily and economically that it could easily be brought down together with the Hitler regime and, secondly, to impute as many warmongering intentions as possible to their own leaders in order to serve British anti-German propaganda worldwide.

One cannot be surprised by Wiedemann's report if one knows that this informant called the conspirator Dohnanyi his friend. In his book "Der Mann der Feldherr werden wollte", he writes on page 171: " ... I reported Hitler's remark to my friend, Reichsgerichtsrat von Dohnanyi, who was later executed as one of the leaders of the resistance movement, and added: "Only the revolver can help against this man! But who should do it? I'm in a position of trust here!"Oster and Dohnanyi came to me quite regularly to find out about Hitler's attitude. Schacht had already told me a few months earlier: 'The man must go. ' 'I myself considered it my duty,' he continued, 'to let the Americans as well as the British know that Hitler was very much toying with the idea of war.... ""

In January 1939, Wiedemann took up his post as Consul General in San Francisco, which he had requested from Hitler himself. In America, Wiedemann continued his treacherous game, as can be seen from a report attached to the unpublished Morgenthau "diaries" entitled "The Case of Sir William Wseman, Stefanie von Hohenlohe- Waldenburg and Captain Fritz Wedemann". The Briton Wseman claims that Wedemann made no secret in America of his rejection of the existing German government. He had sought the interview with Wseman in order to find out "how drastically England would treat the

Germans in the event of defeat, a question in which the conspiracy was known to be very interested". Among other things, Wiseman stated, "The President has four years left to take the United States into the war, and he is apparently determined to do so." The interview took place on October 7, 1940!

On November 27, 1940, Wiseman again had a conversation with Wiedemann that lasted five hours and whose content was communicated directly to Halifax, bypassing the British Ambassador Lothian in Washington. The tenor of the report was that Wiseman no longer spoke of a peace offer to Hitler, but only of his "elimination". Wiedemann agreed and declared "that a lasting peace could only be concluded with a strong German party, perhaps a monarchy, and that the present Hitler regime must be destroyed". (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 120.)

On August 6, 1938, another conspirator emerged in the person of Rittmeister v. Koerber. He appeared in the British embassy in Berlin with the British military attaché Mason-MacFarlane and explained to him, as Annelies v. Ribbentrop reported, that he was "fanatically anti-Hitler", that the opposition had "increased to an unbelievable degree and that war could only be avoided by overthrowing the Hitler regime from within". He warned that Franco's victory would sound the death knell for England and France "if England did not succeed in buying out Italy". He went on to explain that the German army was "completely unfit" for war at the moment, and that it, like the German people, must be immediately "infused with English counter-propaganda . . . "This report by a German traitor", Annelies v. Ribbentrop wrote verbatim, "was brought to London by Henderson himself through Mason-MacFarlane in order to discuss the 'German military situation' described by Koerber in person at the War Office1. The British military attaché also took with him a private letter from Henderson to Halifax dated August 8, in which the ambassador stated, in contradiction to the German conspirators, that he believed 'that Hitler wanted a peaceful solution but could not wait indefinitely . . .'

The Henderson report, which Halifax received about the Koerber meeting, stated that the German 'war party hoped for a blitzkrieg' of no more than three months if Britain remained neutral. Koerber emphasized that everything depended on the British attitude to defeat the German 'war party', and therefore it had to enter the war so that it would not last 'only three months, but three years'." (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 121.)

This report by the Resistance member Rittmeister von Koerber is the blatant and obvious proof that the conspiracy wanted war and was striving for it, because they were convinced that Hitler and his government could only be overthrown by a German military defeat. For this reason,

Chamberlain had to be persuaded by appropriate information that he could assess a war against Germany "without risk", no matter how untrue, misleading and fantastic the conspirators' secret reports were.

In order to make the German people understand Hitler's downfall, they simply claimed that Hitler wanted war, a lie that was systematically spread in Germany and the rest of the world via the Luxembourg and Strasbourg radio stations.

At the end of August 1938, the then State Secretary of the Foreign Office, Ernst von Weizsäcker, received the last High Commissioner of the League of Nations, Professor Carl-J. Burckhardt, in his office and asked him to meet him half an hour later at a certain place in Berlin's Tiergarten where they could talk undisturbed. Burckhardt reported in his book "My Danzig Mission", page 181 f., that von Weizsäcker had informed him of all the steps he had taken so far in London to make Hitler's true intentions clear there, and that it was definitely a matter of conspiracy with the potential opponent, a double game of extreme danger. He had then asked him to travel to Switzerland as quickly as possible in order to inform the Foreign Office that it was necessary to speak unequivocally to Hitler. It would be best to send an undiplomatic Englishman, such as a general with a tailstock, to appear before Hitler. After all, he had explained that he was in contact with Canaris, who was one of the few to whom he could speak without backing up.

Burckhardt also reported that he had telephoned the parliamentary secretary to the Foreign Secretary, Halifax, from the British legation in Berne to convey Weizsäcker's wish to him. During the Nuremberg trial hearings, he had mentioned these events to exonerate Weizsäcker, but apparently London could no longer remember them at the time.

In the Tiergarten discussion, the Danzig Gauleiter Förster was accused of having spoken about "German conquest plans", for example, which Burckhardt had described to Weizsäcker as "nonsense", "because they did not correspond at all to the Führer's ideas". Here Weizsäcker had interrupted him with a contemptuously resigned gesture and explained that they were precisely "the Führer's ideas". Hitler was today completely under the spell of Ribbentrop, who persuaded him that he had nothing to gain from
England and that he had little to fear from France. General Ludwig Beck, on the other hand, had "taken his courage in both hands and told Hitler the truth". His subsequent offer of resignation had been accepted. Weizsäcker had also tried to open Hitler's eyes, but the State Secretary had not made an offer of resignation. Weizsäcker himself described his conversation with Burckhardt as a risky and unusual step. "It was more than diplomatic mediation, it was conspiracy with a potential opponent". (Emst v. Weizsäcker, "Erinnerungen", page 177f.)

Weizsäcker took an even more unusual step as the critical date approached, namely the opening of the Nuremberg Party Congress (September 5, 1938), in agreement with Colonel General Beck. A cousin of Erich Kordt was sent to his brother Theo, who was chargé d'affaires in London at the time, with a message, the wording of which she had memorized. Theo Kordt asked Chamberlain's closest adviser, Sir Horace Wilson, to be received secretly by the Foreign Secretary and entered 10 Downing Street through the garden entrance on the night of September 7 so as not to be observed by attentive reporters. After a brief conversation with Sir Horace Wilson, he asked the Foreign Secretary Halifax to come in and then left Kordt alone with him. Kordt made the following statement to Halifax:

"Today I come to you not in my capacity as German chargé d'affaires, but as spokesman for political and military circles in Berlin who want to prevent war by all means. The message which I am about to send you has been carefully considered, and it seems to us that it will attract the attention of the British Government.

It is our full knowledge that Hitler is planning an attack on Czechoslovakia and assumes that the resulting war can be localized, that is, that France will not fulfill her obligations to Czechoslovakia under the Treaty of Alliance of January 25, 1924, and subsequent agreements in connection therewith. The political and military circles on whose behalf I speak opposed this policy to the utmost. . .

After the World War Lloyd George declared that the peoples and governments had in fact "slithered into it". The men for whom I speak are of the opinion that the situation in July 1914 would not have become so hopeless if Sir Edward Grey had made it quite clear on behalf of the British Government that in the event of a Franco-German war Britain would not stand aside. This timely warning would have had a moderating influence on the Imperial Government's decision.

If, therefore, France is willing to fulfill her obligations to her Czechoslovak ally, and if the Prime Minister's assurances that the British Empire could not stand aside in such a case are sincere, my friends consider it necessary that the British Government should make this decisive fact clear. The declaration we propose cannot be sufficiently unambiguous and firm for the purpose we have in view. Hitler and Ribbentrop will probably not dare to start a war if an open British declaration makes it clear to the German people that war with Great Britain is inevitable in the event of an

attack on Czechoslovakia. Should Hitler nevertheless insist on his belligerent policy, I am in a position to assure you that the political and military circles for whom I speak are 'arming themselves against a sea of plagues by resisting them1...

If the requested declaration is given, the leaders of the army are prepared to take up arms against Hitler's policy. A diplomatic defeat would result in a very serious setback for Hitler in Germany and would practically mean the end of the National Socialist regime."

Theo Kordt concluded his oral message to Halifax from the German Secretary of State in the Foreign Office with the words: "It was not easy for me to speak to the British Foreign Secretary in this form. But the German patriots see no other way out of the dilemma than close cooperation with the British government in order to prevent the greatest crime of war."

"Lord Halifax," Theo Kordt later told his brother Erich, "had listened to me with deep seriousness and rapt attention. He thanked me for the frankness with which I had spoken at this most critical moment. He also emphasized that a war over the Sudeten question would be a crime. But this war would be unavoidable if Hitler used force against Czechoslovakia. Halifax promised to inform the Prime Minister and one or two colleagues in the Cabinet. I could be sure that the matter would be examined very carefully and treated confidentially.

As I closed the garden gate of Downing Street behind me, I had the impression that the requested unequivocal statement would be forthcoming - and I assume that the British statement published a few days later was due to our conversation.

When Chamberlain then flew to Berchtesgaden, I wished the old statesman luck on his great mission. I was convinced
convinced that he would speak clearly." (Erich Kordt, "Not from the files", page 279ff.)

Weizsäcker's message to Halifax and his reply to it reveal the insincerity of both sides. The conspiracy hoped for the utmost severity against Hitler from the British in order to favor the overthrow, not without talking about fighting for peace, while Halifax also hypocritically spoke of the crime of a war over Czechoslovakia, which England would demonstrably already trigger if it saw itself in a military position to do so.

Since the Weizsäcker message, England could count on the German conspirators, who were ready to bring down the Hitler regime from within, although they did not succeed, could not succeed despite the English subversive propaganda, which constantly poured over the German people with the help of the lying news material supplied by the German resistance.

On the other hand, the misjudgement of British plans and intentions on the part of our conspiring diplomats was a complete one. The Chamberlain biographer Professor Feiling writes that Neville Chamberlain had already consistently campaigned for the containment of Germany as British Chancellor of the Exchequer and later as Prime Minister. He wanted to prevent by all means the natural development in Europe with a strong Germany, even if it would have served as a bulwark against the Bolshevik East.

Feiling goes on to explain that Chamberlain delayed every revision provided for in the Treaty of Versailles and described the right to self-determination as an "insidious weapon of Germany". Even before the restoration of German military sovereignty in the Rhineland, the then Chancellor of the Exchequer was very critical of Germany's capacity for industrial expansion.

"Many have written and spoken as if Chamberlain's main aim in Munich had been to buy time to arm for an inevitable war. He would indeed have been unsuitable for his post if he had not had this in mind. As we know from his letters, however, this had long been the case. " (Keith Feiling, "The Life of Neville Chamberlain", page 399.)

"Even Germany's non-aggression pact with Poland in 1934 appeared to Chamberlain to be a threat to the British Isles, and even at this time he described Germany as the enemy to be watched closely. On July 1, 1934, he wrote in his diary: 'In the absence of security, other nations would not give up their planes and bombs, and we are likely to deter Germany from maddogging if we have an air fleet which can be used if necessary.
air fleet that can bomb the Ruhr from Belgium if necessary.'" (Keith Feiling, "The Life of Neville Chamb I erlain", page 253.)

Churchill, too, was primarily an advocate of the traditional English policy of the "balance of power", to which he openly committed himself in his memoirs with the words "that all the old realities are present again and that our national salvation depends on whether we can once more unite all the powers in Europe to contain, prevent and, if necessary, destroy German supremacy". (Winston Churchill, "The Second World War", Volume I, page 259.)

On September 2, 1938, shortly before the Nuremberg Party Congress, the then Lieutenant Colonel (ret.) Hans Boehm-Tettelbach traveled to England as a confidant of General Haider and Colonel Oster to "ask the closest members of the British Foreign Office for the firmness of the British government against Hitler's demands. My clients want nothing other than a categorical no from the British government." He sent his message to Sir Vansittart through an intelligence officer . . . (Helmut Rönnefahrt, "The Sudeten Crisis and International Politics", page 247).

After the war, the later Colonel General Franz Haider, then Chief of the Army General Staff, explained his involvement in the resistance to the author Peter Bor as follows: "Since the counter-ideas and warnings of the General Staff about a future war and a policy leading to it that had been attempted during Beck's time had gone unheeded, as Hitler seemed determined to bring about an armed conflict with Czechoslovakia, preparations were made with my cooperation to eliminate Hitler's government. It was not an assassination - I have always rejected political murder - but a military occupation of the Reich Chancellery and the essential offices headed by party men, solely for the purpose of keeping the peace at all costs and, under the protection of the army, to enable the question of state leadership to be settled anew according to the free decision of the German people." . . .

While Hitler studied the maps for the most favorable approach to Czechoslovakia, the date for the coup d'état was set between September 14 and 16.

On September 14, Haider gave the go-ahead for the coup d'état and the die seemed to be cast. In the presence of Field Marshal von Witzleben, Haider's aide delivered the news that the British Prime Minister Chamberlain was prepared to negotiate with Hitler. (Peter Bor, "Conversations with Haider", page 127f.)

What were Hitler's demands that the British government should oppose in the opinion of the conspiracy?

Hitler's demand, which he made in the first meeting with Chamberlain on September 15, 1938 on the Obersalzberg, was based on the right of peoples to self-determination, which was already enshrined in the Versailles Peace Treaty as a prerequisite for the possible revision of the same. Hitler invoked this right guaranteed to all peoples to Chamberlain and asked him whether he was prepared to agree to the Sudeten German territories being detached. Chamberlain replied that he recognized the solution to the Sudeten German question in principle, but that he had to ask that no military measures be taken against Czechoslovakia while the British Cabinet was deliberating. Hitler responded to Chamberlain's request by asking the British government to persuade Czechoslovakia to withdraw its mobilization, as such threats could easily lead to a new May 21 and a serious situation. Chamberlain replied that he thought the warning of 21 May was necessary because, after the outbreak of the First World War, Britain had been accused of not having made its intentions sufficiently clear and had therefore slipped into war.

This argument had been presented to the British government a week earlier in the secret Weizsäcker embassy in order to prompt Britain to make repeated threats against Germany, a sign of the way in which the conspiracy was able to influence Britain's behavior.

Annelies von Ribbentrop reports on the hours following Hitler's meeting with Chamberlain: "Chamberlain spent the evening with his companions Sir Horace Wilson (Chamberlain's closest adviser and cabinet member), Strang from the Foreign Office and Henderson at the Hotel Berchtesgaden er Hof, where the interpreter Schmidt (also a member of the conspiracy) was staying. (Paul Schmidt, 'Statist auf diplomatischer Bühne' page 398.) It can be assumed that other opponents of Hitler were staying there and, as things stood, were able to hold talks with the British guests without being suspected. The next day, Sir Horace Wilson wrote a memorandum dated September 16, 1938, with the location 'Somewhere over Germany', about the conversations he had had with various Germans as Chamberlain's confidant. (DBFPII, No. 897; Documents on British Foreign Policy, the author)

These men included the German ambassador in London Dirksen, Weizsäcker and Schmidt (interpreter). Eight days earlier, Weizsäcker had urged the British in his secret message to make a sharp

to force Hitler to withdraw from the Sudeten question by means of a sharp public statement in order to bring about the fall of the German government through such a diplomatic defeat. Now he and his fellow conspirators were crushed that the preparations of Haider and Witzleben to arrest Hitler had been prevented by Chamberlain's arrival and that peace had been virtually saved (Ernst v. Weizsäcker, "Erinnerungen", page 1 8 : 3.)...

Wilson also learned from Dirksen that the German delegation on the Obersalzberg, including the legal advisor Gaus, had prepared in detail to negotiate .practical matters1 concerning the handover of the Sudeten German territories. Wilson notes this in a rather mocking way, although Chamberlain had telegraphed to Hitler as the reason for his surprise visit that he hoped to find a peaceful solution to the Sudeten question together with him. (Keith Feiling, 'The Life of Neville Chamberlain', page 363.) But Chamberlain not only wanted to buy time with his 'master-stroke' and test the German conspirators for their worth, but also to create a peace alibi before the world, exactly what Ribbentrop had warned against in 'A 5522' (main report of December 28, 1937). . .

Chamberlain was satisfied with his trip, on which at least his 'alter ego', Sir Horace Wilson, had made personal contact with the conspirators, as Wilson's memorandum proves. Chamberlain wrote to his sister that Hitler was a man 'who could be trusted if he gave his word'. (Keith Feiling, 'The

Life of Neville Chamberlain', page 367.) But he told his staff on his return to England: 'Hitler was anomalous, unpredictable and surrounded by bad advisers. He therefore believed that he would not last long in such a state of hysteria* (Keith Feiling, 'The Life of Neville Chamberlain', page 365). With this, Chamberlain pointed out to the political insiders the prospect of Hitler's imminent overthrow, which the conspirators were planning for the end of September and which, in their eyes, would only be understood in Germany if England declared war at the same time. However, Chamberlain did not want this to happen at this time. The risk was too great for him. He preferred to accept that Hitler would not be overthrown now and that Benesch would be forced to voluntarily cede the entire Sudeten region." (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 158ff.)

Benesch had been urged by England to voluntarily renounce the Sudeten German territories, and with this Czechoslovakian declaration of renunciation, Chamberlain came to Godesberg on September 22 for further talks with Hitler. He came with the proposal to separate the territories without a referendum. In the districts

districts with a German population of 80 percent the decision would be easy, he said naively, in the areas with a lower percentage of Germans he was thinking of an average of 65 percent. Hitler, on the other hand, called for a much fairer referendum along the lines of the Saar referendum, as he had done in Berchtesgaden, and proposed an international control commission to monitor the vote. In addition, he declared his willingness to return districts whose Czech character was to result from the vote.

Chamberlain, however, repeatedly rejected Hitler's fair demand on the grounds that the plebiscite in the Sudetenland would set a precedent for the other oppressed minorities in the Czechoslovak state and thus lead to the complete dismemberment of this Versailles entity. In addition, he wanted to prevent Hitler's prestige success, which he could count on through an internationally supervised successful vote.

No agreement could be reached on the voting issue, and Chamberlain telegraphed to London that the first meeting had been unsatisfactory, whereupon Halifax telegraphed to the British envoy Newton in Prague on the evening of 22 September that the French and British governments could no longer accept responsibility for advising the Czech government not to mobilize.

Sir Samuel Hoare writes about this process in "Nine eventful years", page 284: "Possibly a Czech mobilization destroyed the last prospect of success. And yet we felt that we could no longer tie the hands of a country so directly threatened with invasion. This feeling was stronger than the fear of possible reactions in Godesberg, and so we authorized Newton to declare that we could not advise the Czech government to postpone mobilization any longer."

When Hitler received the news of the Czechoslovak government's general mobilization announced over the radio shortly after the start of the second meeting in Bad Godesberg on 23 September, he informed the British and declared that the Czechs would naturally force him to take countermeasures. Chamberlain defended Benesch's mobilization as an understandable precautionary measure and simply asserted the falsehood that Germany had mobilized first. Without having read the memorandum containing the proposals for a peaceful settlement which he had requested and which had been handed to him at the beginning of the negotiations, Chamberlain asked whether the contents of the memorandum were Hitler's last word; Hitler answered in the affirmative, whereupon the British Prime Minister declared that it would then be pointless to continue the meeting.

The second Godesberg meeting on September 23 was attended by Hitler, Reich Foreign Minister v. Ribbentrop, the conspirators von Weizsäcker and interpreter Schmidt. Between the Godesberg meeting days, the British, who were accommodated on the Petersberg, had kept September 23 free of negotiations and certainly had sufficient opportunity to make undisturbed personal contact with the conspirators.

When Chamberlain asked Hitler at the second meeting whether he meant the invasion of Czech territory with his reply that the Czech general mobilization would force him to take countermeasures, Hitler replied: "No, of course not." He wanted to stick to his promise not to attack Czechoslovakia during the negotiations. This deprived the conspiracy of the occasion for the planned coup.

Adolf Hitler did not allow himself to be provoked by the Czechoslovak mobilization. On the morning of September 24, Chamberlain and his entourage said goodbye with a hearty "Auf Wiedersehen!" after expressing his satisfaction at the end of the meeting about the relationship of trust between him and the Führer.

This reunion then became a reality on September 29, when the Munich Agreement was reached through Mussolini's mediation, which gave the British government the much-desired deadline for accelerated rearmament, but bitterly disappointed the conspiracy in Germany.

After Chamberlain had offered to come to Germany again, Hitler invited him, Daladier, the French Prime Minister, and Mussolini to the conference in Munich. The Prime Minister was accompanied by William Strang, Head of the European Department at the Foreign Office, and Sir Horace Wilson, Daladier by Alexis Leger, Secretary General of the French Foreign Ministry, and Roland de Margerie, later Ambassador in Bonn;

only Mussolini came accompanied by his Foreign Minister Count Ciano. The British Foreign Minister Halifax remained in London so that the French Foreign Minister Bonnet could be excluded from the conference, who, like the German government, wanted a general agreement between the European countries, but England was not prepared to do so.

In preparation for the conference, the German negotiating proposals were drawn up by Göring, Neurath and the Italian ambassador in Berlin, Attolico, in accordance with the proposals that Hitler had presented to the British prime minister in Bad Godesberg, with Ribbentrop being excluded, which were then presented by Mussolini as his own and accepted by all the conference participants.

On the day of the conference, Halifax telegraphed the British de-

Halifax telegraphed to the British delegation in Munich: "Information reached me this evening at 9.30 p.m. from moderate circles in Germany that the firm attitude of the British Government, mainly the mobilization of the fleet, during the last few days has been extraordinarily effective. For this became known in wide circles in Germany through the radio in German from England, Luxembourg and Strasbourg." (FO 371/21664,29. 9. 1938.)

The information from the moderate circles in Germany, which Halifax passed on to Munich, also came from Goerdeler, who had given Halifax the following urgent advice by telephone the night before: "Don't give in a single inch, Hitler is in a difficult situation. Make sure you shift the responsibility for any use of force onto his shoulders... Hitler may be more compliant tomorrow. If not, I still say hold your position. Do not be frightened. If those responsible friends within Germany cannot bring him down before he starts the war, he will not be able to hold out for more than two weeks." Asked whether an initial success in the field might not change everything, Goerdeler replied: "No, not even then."

Asked about our radio broadcasts, Goerdeler replied: "Excellent! Continue full steam ahead with your firmness, but in mild language. Tell us about Roosevelt, about Chamberlain's efforts and proposals, but also about the British and French mobilization and declare that you will answer violence with violence." (FO 371/21664.) (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 181 f.)

There were certain reasons why the German Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop was not wanted at the talks in Berchtesgaden and Bad Godesberg. The British knew that Ribbentrop recognized their true intentions and saw through their plans, which they were trying to disguise with a lot of outward friendliness and deceptive manoeuvres. He could have seriously disrupted their negotiations at the highest level. Ribbentrop must have been at least as much in the way of the German conspirators, whose friend and interpreter Schmidt would not have been able to convey the content and atmosphere of the negotiations as the conspirators wished if the German Foreign Minister had been present during the talks between Hitler and Chamberlain.

Chamberlain's unscrupulous behavior is shown by the following incident: the very night after the conclusion of the Munich Conference, he asked the then President of the Privy Council of State, von Neurath, to arrange a meeting with the Führer alone for the next day, as he still had a proposal to make.

would like to make a proposal. Hitler, who was initially reluctant to do so, was finally persuaded by Neurath. At the meeting, Hitler agreed to the following German-English declaration that Chamberlain had presented to him:

"September 30, 1938

We, the German Führer and Chancellor and the British Prime Minister, had a further meeting today and are agreed that the question of German-English relations is of the utmost importance for both countries and for Europe.

We regard the agreement signed last night and the Anglo-German naval agreement as symbolic of the desire of our two peoples never again to go to war with each other.

We are determined that the method of consultation shall be the method by which any other question which may affect our two countries shall be dealt with, and we are determined to continue our efforts to remove any causes of disagreement in order to help secure the peace of Europe.

Adolf Hitler
Neville Chamberlain"

What Chamberlain's declaration actually meant and what he intended by it is clear from a comment that the Prime Minister's Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Alec Douglas Home, wrote to his biographer Kenneth Young as a participant in the Munich Conference: "An agreement was signed. . . But that was not the end. Chamberlain wanted a separate Anglo-German declaration of their mutual peaceful intentions. Douglas Home

calls this a calculated part of the Prime Minister's tactics. He remembers Chamberlain at the breakfast table the next morning, September 30th. He had drafted a document in the expectation of seeing Hitler again before he left Munich. Chamberlain took the document to Hitler's apartment, and Hitler signed it with suspicious readiness. Douglas knows that Chamberlain simply wanted to secure an agreement which, whether Hitler honored it or not, would be a resounding success (bull point) in the United States and in terms of general public opinion. If Hitler were to break the agreement, it would show the whole world without contradiction that he was completely untrustworthy, and then there would be nothing left but war. "Basically the scrap of paper was a whitewash," Chamberlain told Doug, "but I will make the greatest possible propaganda for him."

The Prime Minister had no confidence in Hitler's signature, he had merely gained a tactical advantage. But back in England, Chamberlain's calculations let him down. As huge crowds cheered and shouted in Downing Street, those around him urged him to show himself at the window of No. 10 and say something about peace in our time. He refused. But then, more to disperse the crowd, he was suddenly on the balcony and heard himself say the following words: "This is the second time in our history that peace has returned to Downing Street along with honor from Germany. I believe it is peace in our time. Douglas knows that Chamberlain bitterly regretted his words because they were completely out of character. A week later he asked the House of Commons not to attach too much importance to these words, words spoken in a moment of excitement after a long and trying day.

The ink was barely dry on the Munich Agreement, the applause had barely died away, when Douglas' services to his boss were subjected to an even greater strain. While Chamberlain retained his popularity as a peacemaker at home - though it waned as Hitler's aggression grew bolder - he faced hatred in Parliament from the Opposition and also from some 30 to 40 British Conservatives. The leaders of this splinter party were Churchill, Eden, Cranborne, the later Lord Salisbury, L. S. Amery and DuffCooper, who had retired as First Lord of the Admiralty after the Munich Agreement." (Kenneth Young, "Sir Alec Douglas Home", page 53f.)

Annelies von Ribbentrop aptly comments on Chamberlain's actions with the sentence: "In reality, Chamberlain only wanted to obtain a further 'peace alibi', which Ribbentrop had already warned of in A 5522 (Ribbentrop's main report to Hitler) after the so-called Halifax peace trip in November 1937." (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 183f.)

DuffCooper writes in his memoirs "Das läßt sich nicht vergessen", page 318f., referring to his speech to the House of Commons in justification of his resignation: "I went on to point out the wretched scrap of paper which the Prime Minister had so proudly waved before the eyes of the public - that agreement signed by Hitler and himself never to go to war with each other. Perhaps, I said, such a document could do little harm. But I pointed out that the signing of such a declaration by the Prime Minister of England, together with the dictator of a great state, without consulting his colleagues, without any communication to his allies, without any contact with the Dominions, and without the assistance of an experienced diplomatic expert, was not a good idea.
experienced diplomatic expert is not the way in which the foreign affairs of the British Empire should be conducted . . .

I had hardly sat down when I received a letter from Winston Churchill:

"Your speech was one of the most splendid performances I have ever heard - admirable in form, solid in argument, a shining example of courage and public spirit.1"

Chamberlain had neither succeeded in provoking Hitler into military action by initiating the Czechoslovak general mobilization, nor was he able to inflict a diplomatic defeat such as that of 21 May. Chamberlain's successful efforts to postpone the military confrontation with Germany, which he had long since decided upon, meant an outright defeat for the German conspiracy. In addition to this, their informers such as Goerdeler, Kleist-Schmenzin, Wiedemann, Koerber, the Kordt brothers, Boehm-Tettelbach and others, as well as their patrons such as Beck, Haider, Oster and Weizsäcker, had put themselves completely at the mercy of the British government because of their treasonous conspiracies.

For this reason, too, the German resistance had no choice but to continue its dangerous and reprehensible game with the enemy of the country, who could no longer be a potential enemy.

The path of the German conspiracy and England
into the catastrophe of war

On November 14, 1938, a meeting of the Foreign Policy Committee was held under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister to discuss the Anglo-German relationship at the highest level on the basis of highly confidential reports received and to draw conclusions from them.

After introductory statements by Chamberlain, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Halifax, read to the Committee extracts from his reliable reports, which came mainly from German conspirators. These sources from Halifax state:

"One source, purporting to give the views of Mr. Schacht, Captain Wiedemann, and General Beck, asserts that the German financial situation is now absolutely catastrophic because of the defense of the Rhine, the mobilization of the armed forces and the rearmament. He, Dr. Schacht, was aware of the financial chaos that was befalling Germany, but he was powerless to stem the tide. He would therefore either have to reduce the value of money or cut spending, which Hitler was resisting.

Hitler's opposition is divided into two camps, one moderate and one extremely extreme. Herr Ribbentrop urges Hitler to undertake a huge expansion program into the Black Sea, Turkey and India, but Goering holds him back.

The radical Nazis believe that the thousand-year Reich of Nazism has begun, in which extortion and every kind of murder and crime is not only permitted but is the supreme duty of its statesmen. They intend to cut off Britain's and France's connection with Italy and to induce the Arabs to open war before Christmas.

A second informant remarked that they were riding a very high horse both in the government and in party circles in Germany. In the Foreign Office and the Berlin Propaganda Ministry, a German correspondent said they believed that the Germans now had Europe in their pocket. The fear of Britain's rearmament should not be taken so seriously.

A former chargé d'affaires in London (presumably conspirator Theo Kordt) recently remarked in a private conversation that he had always been a friend and admirer of England and held the opposite view to that of radical Nazis, that England was decadent.... We old diplomats can only shake our heads and be ridiculed by many young Nazis. He added that the party had discussed the partition of England'... .

An intimate friend of Hitler's said that England's collapse was only a matter of time and would be hastened by joint German and Italian tactics, 'Chamberlain would be far too popular in Germany and the continual praise of him would not be welcome'. Hitler himself remarked in a private conversation, 'If I were Chamberlain, I would not hesitate for a minute to prepare my country for total war in a very drastic way and to organize it thoroughly. If the British do not introduce universal conscription by the spring of 1939, I think their world empire will be lost. It is astonishing how easy the democracies make it for us to achieve our goal. I will use the same tactics on the colonial question as I did on the Czech question. The more they demand and the more they rage, the more I will demand of them. . .

Dr. Erich Kordt, Legation Councillor of the Foreign Office, who began to sabotage German foreign policy as early as the mid-1930s through treacherous conspiracies with British politicians. He and his brother Theo played a leading role in the poisoning of German-British relations.

Dr. Erich Kordt in the Ribbentrop delegation in London in 1936. Kordt third from the right.

The State Secretary for Foreign Affairs explained that he and his advisors had come to the conclusion after the Munich Agreement that it had had two diametrically opposed results. Firstly, the whole German people had realized with horror that Hitler's policy had brought them to the brink of war and that they were grateful to the Prime Minister both for avoiding the war and for standing up for their legitimate rights. Secondly, this reaction in German public opinion had driven some of the highest Nazi leaders, not excluding Hitler, mad.... It would be unreasonable to conclude that the German people wanted to quarrel with us . . . It is possible that a determined stand on our part, by emphasizing our strength, might discourage the extremists in Germany and encourage the moderates (conspirators). Lord Halifax reluctantly came to the conclusion that in the present circumstances it was not expedient to proceed at the present moment with the intended Anglo-German talks, although it would be possible to make some progress in the discussions with Signor Mussolini." (Public Record Office, FO 371/21658, November 14, 1938.)

The reports of German conspirators that so extensively occupied the Foreign Policy Committee, Britain's highest advisory body on foreign policy, may be absurd to the minds of older readers who lived through the Third Reich as adults, but to the authoritative Prime Minister Chamberlain and his like-minded politicians they had their effect and served their mutual purpose.

By the cessation of "Anglo-German conversations", Halifax certainly only meant the official ones between the governments of the two countries and not those with the German conspirators, as would soon become clear.

As early as mid-November 1938, a memorandum by Goerdeler was again available in London, which he had given to his English liaison officer, Dr. William Schairer, to pass on to the head of the economic policy department in the Foreign Office, Ashton-Gwatkin, to the King of Belgium, to President Roosevelt and to the Frenchman Paul Reynaud. In it, as Annelies v. Ribbentrop reported, Goerdeler believed he could demand of England that "the English and French governments should send a note to the German government proposing immediate negotiations on the outstanding issues, such as disarmament, colonies, economic regulation, etc., on condition that the policy of violence in internal matters ceases immediately, as well as in foreign policy matters. If this offer and these conditions are not accepted by Germany, diplomatic relations are to be broken off. In this case, Goerdeler guaranteed that certain action would begin within Germany to install a government that would accept these conditions.

would accept these conditions. He himself would go outside Germany to publish a book he had already prepared and to organize open opposition to the Nazi government from outside. Above all, he asked that no concessions be made by England or France during these critical weeks, as they would only strengthen the position, ambition and violence of the extremists. In particular, he asks that no steps be taken to settle the Spanish question in the interests of General Franco. Attn. Gwatkin. (FO 371/21665, C 14809, 22. 11. 1938 - Top Secret.)" (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 194f.)

When Goerdeler realized that his memorandum of November had not been received positively by the British, he presented a foreign policy plan to the British government at the beginning of December, which contained German demands that went far beyond those expressed by Hitler. In his so-called Goer- deler Plan, for example, he demanded Britain's agreement to the elimination of the corridor and understanding that Germany would take the appropriate measures to this end.

According to the plan, Germany was to receive a contiguous colonial territory and a loan in gold of four to six billion marks to secure its currency on the international market and gradually lift its import and export controls. Further rearmament was to be halted and general disarmament arranged through negotiations between England, France and Germany. Germany would guarantee the existing status quo in the Mediterranean, give up its interest in the Spanish question and support an early peaceful solution there.

Germany would also cooperate in the immediate restoration of the rights and position of the white race in East Asia if England and France would take a favorable attitude toward the immediate cession of the Corridor. England, France and Germany should at once form a new League of Nations, to which all States should belong, but which should have no power of command, but the right and duty to mediate between nations. The time had come for cooperation in Europe in order to eliminate wars that only cause damage.

According to the Foreign Office document (FO 371/21659, C 15084), Ashton-Gwatkin recommended a positive response to Goerdeler's plan, who had assured him that the German generals would agree to his policy if the British government accepted his program. The more authoritative politicians of the Foreign Office categorically rejected Goerdeler's plan.

Sir Robert Vansittart told Ashton-Gwatkin that he had read his support for Goerdeler's ideas with horror because, in the British view, they amounted to nothing less than suicide.

The head of the European Department in the Foreign Office, William Strang, also strictly rejected Goerdeler's plan with the following remarks:

"Goerdeler's plan is similar to the many others we have received from the so-called 'moderates' in Germany. Basically, it almost always says: 'Give Germany back everything it has lost through the peace treaties - in the territorial, financial and economic fields - and Germany will then become a good European and throw out its extreme Nazis. If you refuse this, Hitler will throw you down and probably with success."

Goerdeler demands that we sell the Polish corridor behind Poland's back. We should redistribute the colonies to form a contiguous territory for Germany

We should have nothing to do with this, and it is not time to make such concessions to Germany ... We should take a firm stand against German excesses, we should not run out of other people's property in their absence, though we may not be able to save it - Polish Corridor - , we should say categorically no to financial and colonial demands.

Germany itself is to blame for its economic woes and should return to orthodox financial behavior . . . The German extremist rulers are fighting against the world, lowering living standards and causing internal strife. I am not at all sure that this will not sooner or later fundamentally strengthen Germany. If that is the case, I see no benefit in helping people like Goerdeler and the army."

In mid-December 1938, Erich Kordt, then Secretary to the German Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop, once again joined in the treasonous conspiracy to terrify the British government. According to the report by Annel ies v. Ribbentrop, "he informed Ivone Kirkpatrick (First Secretary at the British Embassy in Berlin) of the alarm message to be forwarded immediately to the British Government that Hitler was going to bomb London in March 1939. On the same day, Kirkpatrick hurried to London to contact Chamberlain immediately. The Prime Minister then summoned all ministers to a Cabinet meeting at 10 a.m. on December 16, as he took Kordt's alarm message very seriously. Chamberlain also received Schacht, who demanded of him: "No appeasement with Hitler!"

On the basis of Kirkpatrick's secret message, the "Committee for
Empire Defense -Commiit tIee of Imperial Defence to three secret meetings. Cadogan (Permanent Undersecretary of State) noted in his diary: "We have achieved a lot and it seems that we are making progress, but sometimes I wish we were a totalitarian state." (Cadogan Diaries, December 15 and 22, 1938, page 130f.) At this meeting it was decided to step up air defense measures and preparations for civilian defense. All British military agencies were ordered to put the British war plans into a state of readiness within three months, i.e. before the end of March 1939.... .

Once again, the German conspirators had the British government by the short hairs.

On January 3, 1939, George Ogilvie-Forbes, Chargé d'Affaires at the British Embassy in Berlin, sent a report to Halifax on the situation in Germany at the beginning of the new year. Ogilvie-Forbes noted that "Hitler has almost achieved his long-cherished wish to annex to the Reich the contiguous areas inhabited by Germans on Germany's borders". This formulation was also used by Henderson when he fought with his government for the Sudetenland and the German city of Danzig to be returned . . . Hitler hoped to be able to neutralize France and, if possible, "to overwhelm Great Britain by an air attack and by the use of submarines as long as she had not yet finished her rearmament ..."

Ogilvie-Forbes ends his report with a warning: "I have heard from various sources that it is still believed in the highest political circles in England that in the event of war with Germany we hold a trump card which could tip the balance, namely the power to provoke an internal revolt. With all due respect, I think this is a dangerous mistake. Whether and when Herr Hitler decides that war with England is necessary, the Germans - extremists and moderates - will follow him with their characteristic discipline as one man, and the SS will deal with any alleged opposition immediately and mercilessly. It will take a long time, and only after much mutual destruction will the opposition raise its head. It is not a trump card that

we already hold in our hands. At best, it's a trump card that may one day be a trump card." (FO 371/22960, C 173, signed Ogilvie-Forbes, Jan. 3, 1939.)

This report was sent to the British embassies in Paris, Warsaw and Prague.

Chamberlain completely lacked a sober assessment of the inner-German situation. In contrast to Ogilvie-Forbes, the Prime Minister was "optimist that the Nazi regime would collapse". This was certainly the impression gained by the Swedish Crown Prince, and Cadogan was of the opinion that "we will stumble into a war if there is no revolution in Germany". (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 197ff.)

On October 24, 1938, the Polish ambassador in Berlin, Lispki, had cautiously accepted the German proposals on the Danzig question. Poland did not respond to the German wish for an extraterritorial road and railroad through the corridor and the reincorporation of Gdansk into the Reich, although Poland had been firmly promised that it would also receive an extraterritorial road in the Gdansk area with motorways and railroads and a free port in Gdansk. At the end of December, the Polish Foreign Minister, Colonel Beck, reinforced his negative stance by speaking of war if Polish sovereignty was violated.

On January 5 and 6, 1939, Polish Colonel Beck was in Germany for talks with Hitler and Ribbentrop, during which he was assured that Germany's relationship with Poland had not changed in the slightest. Hitler explained to him that he must have the greatest interest in a strong Poland, because this would mean considerable military relief vis-à-vis Soviet Russia. Hitler also showed Beck the greatest understanding for the fact that Poland needed access to the sea, but that Germany was also entitled to a connection with East Prussia. Beck did not mention to his interlocutors any violation of Polish sovereignty by roads and railroads through the corridor. He certainly did so all the more in his conversations with the English politicians.

Even the official visit of the German Foreign Minister to Warsaw on January 26, 1939 was unable to bring about a German-Polish agreement on the Gdansk issue, a situation that was entirely in line with England's ideas and intentions and which France ultimately also had to accept, as it was entirely in England's wake. In addition, it was around this time that the American President Roosevelt began to interfere in European politics. The High Commissioner of the League of Nations for Danzig, C. J. Burckhardt, reports in his memoirs "My Danzig Mission" on the anti-German propaganda that began to spread in America, of which he says that the text could have been written "by a German diplomat at the time". The High Commissioner writes:

"From January 1939 onwards there was much talk in Polish circles of the tremendous change of mood in the United States. Twice I heard diplomats accredited in Warsaw allude to a secret report by the Polish ambassador in Washington (to his foreign minister, Colonel Beck). This report was used extensively by German propaganda during the war; it has been published and reads:

'The mood prevailing at the moment in the United States is characterized by an

ever-increasing hatred of Fascism, especially of the person of Chancellor Hitler and of everything connected with National Socialism in general. Propaganda is mainly in Jewish hands, they own almost 100 percent of the radio, film, press and magazines. Although this propaganda is handled very crudely and makes Germany look as bad as possible - the religious persecutions and concentration camps are exploited above all - it is so effective because the local public is completely ignorant and has no idea of the situation in Europe. Right now, most Americans consider Chancellor Hitler and National Socialism to be the greatest evil and danger hanging over the world.

The situation in this country forms an excellent forum for all kinds of speakers and for the emigrants from Germany and Czechoslovakia, who do not spare words in order to stir up the local public with the most diverse slanders. They praise American freedom, in contrast to the totalitarian states. It is very interesting that in this very well thought-out campaign against National Socialism, Soviet Russia is almost completely excluded. If it is mentioned at all, it is done in a friendly way and things are presented as if Soviet Russia were part of the bloc of democratic states. Thanks to skillful propaganda, the sympathy of the American public is entirely on the side of Red Spain.

In addition to this propaganda, a war psychosis is also artificially created: The American people are being persuaded that peace in Europe is hanging by a thread, that war is inevitable. At the same time, the American people are being made unequivocally aware that in the event of a world war, America would also have to take active steps to defend the slogans of freedom and democracy in the world.

President Roosevelt was the first to express his hatred of fascism. His purpose was twofold: 1. to divert the attention of the American people from domestic political problems, especially the problem of the struggle between capital and labor. 2. by creating a mood of war and rumors of impending danger to Europe, he wanted to induce the American people to accept America's enormous rearmament program, for it goes beyond the defense needs of the United States.

On the first point, it must be said that the internal situation on the labor market is constantly worsening, the number of unemployed today is already 12 million . . . Only the large sums of billions spent by the Treasury on emergency work are maintaining a certain calm in the country. So far there have only been the usual strikes and local unrest. However, it is impossible to say today how long this kind of state aid can be sustained. The excitement and indignation of public opinion and the serious conflicts between private enterprise and enormous trusts on the one hand and labor on the other have created many enemies for Roosevelt and caused him many sleepless nights.

On the second point, I can only say that President Roosevelt, as a skillful political player and a connoisseur of American psychology, very soon diverted the attention of the American public from the domestic political situation in order to interest it in foreign policy. The way was quite simple, all that was needed was to stage the threat of war hanging over the world because of Chancellor Hitler on the

one hand, and on the other to create a spectre of an attack on the United States by totalitarian states. The Munich Pact came in very handy for President Roosevelt. He presented it as a capitulation of France and England to the belligerent German militarism. As the saying goes, Hitler put a gun to Chamberlain's head. So France and England had no choice and had to conclude a disgraceful peace.

Furthermore, the brutal action against the Jews in Germany and the emigrant problem, which constantly stirred up the prevailing hatred against everything that was somehow connected with German National Socialism. Individual Jewish intellectuals, such as Bernard Baruch, the Governor of New York State, Lehmann, the newly appointed Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter, Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau and others who are personal friends of President Roosevelt, have taken part in this action. They want the President to become the champion of human rights, of religious freedom and freedom of speech, and they want him to punish the troublemakers in the future. This group of people, who occupy the highest positions in the American government and who want to present themselves as representatives of 'true Americanism' and as 'defenders of democracy', are in fact bound by unbreakable ties to international Jewry. For this Jewish International, which has above all the interests of its race at heart, the elevation of the President of the United States to this most ideal post of defender of human rights was a brilliant move. In this way they have created a very dangerous hotbed of hatred
and hostility in this hemisphere and have divided the world into two hostile camps. The whole problem is being dealt with in a mysterious way: Roosevelt has been given the foundations to revitalize America's foreign policy and in this way at the same time to create the colossal military supplies for the future war, towards which the Jews are striving with full consciousness. Domestically, it is very convenient to divert the public's attention from the anti-Semitism that is always on the rise in America by speaking of the need to defend faith and individual freedom from the attacks of fascism."" (Report of the Polish ambassador in Washington, Grafjetzi Potocki, to the Polish foreign minister in Warsaw on January 12, 1939. Polish documents on the prehistory of the war, Berlin, 1940.) (Carl J. Burckhardt, "Meine Danziger Mission", page 253ff.)

There is not the slightest doubt that the American propaganda against Hitler and Germany was constantly supplied with material by the German conspiracy, directly by emigrants living in America and indirectly by the English "friends of peace". In mid-January 1939, the British statesmen had also decided to coordinate the British government's further foreign policy plans and intentions with the American President Roosevelt. Permanent Under-Secretary of State Cadogan was of the opinion that Britain should now take Roosevelt fully into its confidence. Chamberlain gave a speech in the House of Commons on February 6, 1939, which Cadogan described as a turning point. At the same time, the American government was informed of the British decision to declare war on Germany in the event of an invasion of Holland. The most hair-raising news and false reports of the conspiracy were again received, which Halifax communicated to the Foreig 1 n Policy

Committee and the British Cabinet in a summary from secret sources. There was talk of Hitler occupying Holland in the coming spring and destroying England by war if unification was not achieved, "his ambition was unlimited and he regarded Germany's domination of Europe as a step towards world domination".

As Annelies von Ribbentrop reported, the Briton Conwell-Evans, whom the conspirator Erich Kordt had already been able to use as an intermediary to the British Prime Minister in 1934, had been in Germany every year since 1923 and assured his government that his "information came from people in Germany to whom no state documents or state plans were unknown". He hammered it into his government that the threat to the British Empire was "not a matter of months but of weeks". "All our propaganda reserves should be brought to bear in the next week, instead of next month, and in such a way that the friendly Germans support us."

Like Erich Kordt, Conwell-Evans also called for English power to be emphasized. Malcolm Muggerigge, who has said many a wise thing, aptly commented: "Much mischief in world politics is caused by people who flex their muscles without having any." ("Die Welt", Hamburg, May 20, 1972).

England must not allow "any further successes" by Hitler, wrote Conwell-Evans, adding: "All my German friends pray that Britain and France will not give an inch."

In their justification, they claimed that "Hitler's ambitions and plans were so varied and far-reaching, and changed so often, that they were a constant source of anxiety to the General Staff". At the moment, however, it appeared that Hitler "did not want to subjugate Great Britain" and that "a strike against Russia and Poland was imminent for the spring". Hitler would only turn against the Western powers later and dictate a "German peace". Conwell-Evans was assured "that Hitler would meet his doom by a revolution in the Reich if he risked marching the German people against France and Britain". Finally, he summarizes his report:

"(a) Nazi Germany's foreign policy dreams extend beyond Europe, Asia and Africa . . .

3. Hitler and his general staff are planning to invade Russia in order to replace Stalin and the Bolsheviks with a pro-German government, a new nationalist Russia, and to secede the Ukraine.

4. If the plan is successful, Hitler is counting on a new ally in the East, and he will no longer need to negotiate with England and France . . .

5. As impossible as this absurd plan may seem to us, it had already been worked out by the Nazi government. With Hitler and Ribbentrop, there would be no more equal rights for England.

6. The strength of the opposition - the conspiratorial circle - should not be overestimated. The majority of the armed forces are stronger than ever behind Hitler... The opponents of the Nazi regime are unarmed and can do nothing effective. It is difficult to predict when and how their real chance will come, except through a very dangerous war. Fear of the enemy might then lead the masses to revolt . . .

7. The periodic demands for colonies by Germany are intended to disguise the lack of food as well as Hitler's intentions to attack in the East.

8. For the future, I propose in all modesty that British ideals be emphasized, such as fair play, the open word - written and spoken, tolerance and respect for Christian principles. Our policy should now convince the sensible men in Germany and encourage the opposition. This cannot be achieved only by praising peace. The strength of the British Empire's navy and air force must be emphasized by an educational campaign using radio, the press and all available means. Here and there the almost infinite potential of the United States should be pointed out, because the German people like to associate the British Commonwealth with the United States when they think of the strength of the world powers. Our future policy should be more consolidated with France, the France of Reynaud and not the France of Flandin, Bonnet and the bankers . . . Our position is already badly shaken, but we shall find an opportunity in the coming months to bring Hitler down. We must convince Mussolini and other powers by great national efforts of our perseverance and the value of our friendship." (FO 371/22961,JAN. 20, 1939.)

Vansittart writes in a note and two addenda to the previous reports that one of the informants had never believed that resistance in Germany to the regime would increase so rapidly. Remarkable was the fact that Hitler's popularity had taken a very severe blow. His star was sinking and Göring's was rising. There could be a conflict between the two. Van- sittart also invents the lie that "Hitler personally ordered the synagogues to be set on fire". Vansittart claims to have heard from two German sources that Hitler and Beck had come to an agreement. The French Foreign Minister Bonnet had refused to meet Colonel Beck in France. In Warsaw it was openly said that only "a miracle could save the French alliance. Ribbentrop was not hurrying to Warsaw for nothing, because Phipps (English ambassador in Berlin before Henderson) had reported that Bonnet did not want to save the alliance with Poland". Hitler would "make threats or even declare war on this basis" because of the colonies at the appropriate moment. Hitler expected to "conquer Holland in eight days and then demand from us as much of Africa as he wanted and annex the Dutch East Indies". (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 213 ff.)

In the above report by Conwell-Evans, the realization of the German conspirators that their real chance of overthrowing Hitler would only come "through a very dangerous war", which he would have to lose, is already apparent.

When the Sudetenland was finally separated from Czechoslovakia after the Munich Agreement, the Slovaks, as was to be expected, also demanded their independence. In February 1939, after an autonomous Slovak government under Dr. Tiso had already been formed on October 6, 1938, the Slovak leader Professor Tuka turned to Hitler without any influence from the German side to explain that further coexistence with the Czechs was intolerable for many reasons. Subsequent negotiations between Prague and Bratislava were fruitless, and the situation was exacerbated by the formation of a new Slovak cabinet under Sidor on March 11,

which the national Slovaks opposed. When the Czechs then used military and police force against demonstrating Slovaks, resulting in acts of violence and arrests, Tiso contacted the German government. On March 13, Tiso negotiated with Hitler in Berlin, on March 14 the Hungarians invaded Carpatho-Ukraine, which they had threatened to do the day before, and on the same day Tiso announced the independence of the Slovaks in Bratislava. One day later, on March 15, Tiso asked Hitler to take over the protection of the Slovakian state, which was granted by the German Reich with the ratification of the Protection Treaty of March 23, 1939.

The avalanche set in motion by the resolution of the Sudeten crisis had now also swept away the rest of Czechoslovakia and led to its destruction. Without an effective guarantee from the Western powers France and England, President Hacha was forced to seek annexation to the German Reich in order to avoid being exposed to Soviet influence. On March 15, 1939, an agreement was reached between him and Hitler to annex Bohemia and Moravia to the German Reich as a protectorate.

After the conclusion of the Hitler-Hacha Pact, which was the result of peaceful agreement, Chamberlain had to declare that this pact did not constitute a breach of the Munich Agreement and that the British government was no longer bound by its obligations towards the rest of Czechoslovakia.

Again, the German conspirators were in for a major disappointment, for this peaceful development was the last thing they expected in view of their extensive and intensive efforts to secure a firm and tough response from the Western powers against Hitler. Chamberlain's literal declaration "This state, whose borders we intended to guarantee, broke up from within and thus came to an end" must have been completely incomprehensible to them. But their "friends" in the Foreign Office and the British Cabinet were also disappointed and dissatisfied with the unexpected course of events, as were, of course, the anti-German French politicians and the anti-German French politicians and their American friends.

But even from this dilemma, the experienced British politicians, who could cope with any situation, knew a practicable way out, for which a German conspirator had provided the material. According to Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "the dissatisfied people in the Foreign Office resorted to the advice that Vansittart had presented to Halifax three days earlier, on March 13. On the basis of the . . . . secret report from a Ministerial Director of the War Ministry in Berlin, Vansittart demanded the following in the event that the "Germans should either occupy Prague or drive the Czechs into further dissolution or serfdom":

3. A declaration by the Prime Minister and by you - Halifax - that Hitler had torn up the Munich Treaty.

4. The recall of Sir N. Henderson - for consultations, if you like - but in any case he must stay away for at least a few months.

5. Cancellation of the Trade Commission to Berlin. Not much will come of it anyway, but it would be a humiliation to us not only in Europe but in the United States if we now - should the coup take place this week - sent such a delegation to those criminals whose hands are still bloody and who have just slapped us in our

horrified faces in front of the whole world. I would like to repeat that the effect on Mussolini could also be serious and dangerous.

I came to this conclusion independently, but I am now pleased to see that it is exactly in line with the views of senior German officials. See attached memorandum." (FO 371/22966, C 3234, March 13, 1939, signed by Vansittart.)

One day later, on March 17, Chamberlain actually gave the speech demanded by the German conspirators in Birmingham, the city of his birth. At the suggestion of the German circles, he said the exact opposite of what he had publicly stated on March 15. He began by apologizing for his trips to Berchtesgaden, Godesberg and Munich, admitting that even after a victorious war, Czechoslovakia could never be reconstituted in the Versailles form. He then went on to accuse the German government of the Hitler-Hacha Pact, which he had not only approved in advance but also after its conclusion, because he - Chamberlain - "had not been consulted as a co-signatory of the Munich Agreement". He concealed from the world public the fact that it was he himself who had not wanted such a consultation when he officially declared to the German government on March 14 - even before Hacha's departure from Prague - that "his government was not interested in the questions concerning Berlin and Prague" !
in the questions concerning Berlin and Prague" ! . . . Chamberlain also described the "detachment of the Sudetenland" as an unpleasant surprise, although he himself had forced the Benesch government to voluntarily cede this part of Czechoslovakia ten days before Munich, on September 19, together with Daladier. Then, in his speech of March 17, 1939, Chamberlain posed the provocative question to the whole world as to whether the agreement between Berlin and Prague was Hitler's first attempt to "dominate the world by force". (Freund II, Doc. 9.) (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", p. 244 ff.)

The high German officials whose views Vansittart shares are, of course, members of the German conspiracy, which, as is well known, is also strongly represented in the German War Ministry. One of these conspirators is the Ministerial Director of the War Ministry, on whose ideas, recommendations and demands Vansittart bases his own demands on his government, which, according to the minutes of the Foreign Office 371/22966, C 3234, 13.3.1939, gez. R. Vansittart, read as follows:

"If, after the occupation and other points by the German army, England and France do not take definite steps on Hitler's orders . . the German people and the active and latent opposition will lose all courage and initiative. I consider the following steps to be the minimum of what the German people expect:

4. Sharp attacks in the press and on the radio onHitler, who constantly breaks his word and declares before the whole world that he does not want to make any further territorial claims in Europe after the annexation of the Sudeten German territories. This denunciation, cleverly interwoven with the facts, will make a great impression when it is announced by the British Prime Minister.

5. The British and French ambassadors and, if possible, the American ambassador should be recalled from Berlin and all ongoing negotiations broken off .

. . No loans should be granted to the Imperial Government by Great Britain, because it would be regarded as a weakness of England."

The fact that Chamberlain complied with the conspiracy's request in his speech in Birmingham and thus publicly announced a British foreign policy towards Germany that was bound to lead to the Polish guarantee already proved the conspiracy's complicity in the outbreak of the Second World War.

Chamberlain would not and could not drop the German conspirators because they had become an integral part of his plans and intentions, because he actually believed in the success of the German plans to overthrow Germany, which would give Britain an easy and cheap victory over Germany.
possible. The fact that he himself was constantly misled by the conspirators, while always endeavoring to unscrupulously deceive the German leadership, was to be just as fatal to his country as it was to Germany and the rest of the Western world.

Mrs. von Ribbentrop argued with regard to the Polish guarantee: "As is well known, the Foreign Office considered it a great mistake that England had allowed Poland to emerge, because now Soviet Russia, without a direct border with Germany, could not effectively support the British policy of encirclement. The Polish barrier separated it from the Reich. Chamberlain now had to choose between an alliance with the Soviet Union and an alliance with Poland. He chose Poland, which had the advantage of providing a reason for war against Germany because of the Danzig question. Not only the conspirators but also Roosevelt demanded that Chamberlain, in order to calm the "confused English public opinion", should show himself tough, i.e. prevent a German-Polish unification. . . The decisive American pressure came on March 24, 1939 - two days before Poland's final rejection of Germany - when the US ambassador Bullitt in Paris asked the Polish ambassador there, Lukasiewicz, whether Warsaw would accept a joint alliance if England and France were to propose one to Poland tomorrow*. (Pol. Doc. 1, Doc. 11.) From this, the British guarantee for Poland became the decisive move to prevent Germany's guarantee for the entire Polish territory, including the Corridor, which had been offered by Ribbentrop. As a result of this American intervention, Colonel Beck declared in an internal conference on the same day that he would reject the German proposals because it was very simple: 'We will come to blows.* He accepted the British guarantee and referred to Danzig as .our territory*, although the Free City was not part of the Polish state, but was subject to the League of Nations." (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 253f.)

"In March 1939, Chamberlain had imposed obligations on himself," Annelies v. Ribbentrop continues, "which he neither wanted to nor could fulfill . .. Even if Chamberlain was neither militarily nor politically trained, he still believed he had a trump card: The German conspirators will eliminate Hitler through a coup before his .splendid little war* could escalate into a destructive world conflict....

During the critical days, a military study by the British Chiefs of Staff, which Lord Chatfield, Minister for Defense, circulated in the Cabinet, also made the rounds. In the event of a German-Polish war, it stated frankly, Poland would be

overrun by German troops in two to three months. But in the

conquest of Poland, the German Wehrmacht would suffer heavy losses in men and material. The British Chiefs of Staff strongly urged a mutual guarantee agreement with Warsaw in order to force Germany into a two-front war, which was the only way to make the blockade against the Reich effective." (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 257f.)

On April 3 and 8, the British embassy councillor in Berlin, Ogilvie-Forbes, reported sensational news from a German informant who was in contact with the German War Ministry that England must expect a lightning attack on the British fleet without ultimatum or declaration of war; the entire German army had been ordered to be ready to march. On April 14, he telegraphed that the Reich government intended to ensure the return of Danzig by Hitler's birthday on April 20. He also reported that certain military circles in Germany were of the opinion that Hitler's government would disappear if he provoked a world war over Danzig. Vansittart had also been informed by another agent that German submarines were patrolling the Channel and the Thames estuary; all rumors made up out of thin air to spread uncertainty and fuel war psychosis.

According to the Foreign Office documents of May 25 and June 16, 1939, Goerdeler had presented his latest "peace plan" to the British on May 30, 1939 and told FO official Ashton-Gwatkin: "If Hitler gives the order to march against Poland, the army will certainly march. For the question of regaining Danzig and the corridor is very close to the hearts of the army officers, more so than was the case with Austria and the Sudetenland... The only chance of separating Hitler and the army would be to involve Germany and Italy in a war."

In an interesting letter to Foreign Office official William Strang on April 29, 1939, British Brigadier General Beaumont-Nesbitt wrote in conclusion: "As to the assertion that serious elements of discontent exist within Germany, with which we are in complete agreement, we believe that in this matter time is on the side of Germany's opponents. We also agree that war is probably necessary to transform this discontent into organized resistance." (FO 371/22956, C 6447, 29. 4. 1939, signed Beaumont-Nesbitt to Strang.) (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 259ff.)

On March 20, 1939, it was a British agent named E. W. Tennant who, because of his connections to German industry and conspiratorial circles, believed he had to give his government good advice. He

wrote the following letter to the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, R. Butler:

"In view of my knowledge of Germany, I may be permitted to make some comment on the present serious situation:

If England stands firm now, even if it means war, there is some chance of a revolt in Germany and that Hitler will be overthrown. A large number of Germans have reason to hate Hitler, while they admire and praise Chamberlain. It is of the utmost importance, however, that nothing should be done on our part to help Hitler to rally his people behind him. Messrs. Eden, Duff-Cooper and Churchill must be prevented during the next few days or weeks from writing articles or making speeches in which the Germans are insulted.

Less than 5 percent of the German people know anything about the complete control of their press. Therefore, when British ex-ministers insult Hitler or Germany, it is an absolute godsend for the Nazi government. Goebbels specifically put the remarks of these three men, whom the Germans regard as the main leaders of British public opinion, in front-page newspaper headlines. . .

I am convinced of the real hope that the present regime in Germany would collapse if this country had a great war to fight." (Public Record Office, FO 371/23006, March 25, 1939.)

As documented by the secret document of the Public Record Office, FO 371/22969, dated April 13, 1939, Chief of the General Staff Haider met with the American Chargé d'Affaires in Berlin, Mr. Geist, about which the British Chargé d'Affaires in Berlin, Sir G. Ogilvie-Forbes, reported the following to his government: "General Haider, Chief of the General Staff, yesterday made an approach to my American colleague to ascertain the attitude of the United States and that of Mr. Geist towards Germany.

General Haider informed him that the German army feared a European war, but would certainly march if Hitler ordered it. There would be no alternative. . In answer to the question about German ambitions in the Ukraine, General Haider said that Hitler was currently more inclined to seek economic advantage in Poland. .. The American chargé d'affaires told me that he had spoken to General Haider in unmistakably clear language about his country, which would not hesitate to use its resources against Germany in the event of war unless there was a complete change in German policy . . . "

Of all the conspirators, Dr. Schacht expressed most clearly *that Hitler* could *only be eliminated by war.* Proof of this is also provided by a document from the Public Record Office with the reference FO 371/22969, in which the well-known industrial magnate Hugo Stinnes wrote down in the so-called "Stinnes Papers" what the former Reichsbank President Dr. Schacht had told him. The Foreign Office came into possession of the Stinnes Papers through a Hermann Kantorowicz on August 5, 1939.

In this document, under Hitler's war plans, it first states: "When and how he will

act, nobody knows and in his final decisions he cannot be influenced by anyone. His immediate environment consists largely of yes-men, cowards and subordinates who only tell him what he wants to hear and nothing else.

Hitler's goal is clear: military action against the East at the next opportunity that seems favorable to him in order to improve his strategic position to the ultimate goal: domination of Europe and the destruction of the degenerated British Empire. Today, Hitler and his collaborators consider England to be a second-rate power, unwilling to fight for its real existence.

Headquarters confirms that in the event of a war with Poland, internal sources of aid would be exhausted after six months, but in the event of a war with England, France and Poland after just three months . . . Here the lack of fuel and rubber in particular is the consequence, which restricts motoring . . . Copper and coal are in short supply due to exports to Italy and Spain. There is not enough food. ..

Signs of passive resistance are known to be proven in the decline of coal production, where it is difficult to control underground opinion with ordinary Gestapo means. Opposition to the Hitler regime would be found mainly among workers in Austria, especially in W en, the Ruhr and Sudetenland."

The summary reads: "Not only a large part of the German people, but even high Nazi leaders and cabinet ministers recognize today that no peaceful settlement of European issues is possible with Hitler's ever-increasing desire to rule.... Despite the serious economic difficulties and progressive signs of disintegration, it would be a mistake to assume that the system will collapse without external difficulties or war . . . There is a widespread opinion among the leaders and the people that they cannot free themselves from Hitler without war.

Generals and business leaders are convinced that in a few weeks, due to a shortage of raw materials and especially of fuel, it must come to an end.
must come to an end. A lightning invasion of Poland, which can be assumed to be probable, cannot change the predicted end. In the event of a collapse, the generals of the old school and the moderate group of Nazi leaders are ready and able to take over the government, to eliminate Hitler and the radical leaders such as Ribbentrop, Himmler and Goebbels . . . "

On 24 July, the British Ambassador Henderson, who was the only one of all the responsible British politicians to judge the German position on the Danzig question fairly, wrote to his Foreign Secretary Halifax that despite "a good deal of Polish provocation Hitler has not reacted, or at least has done nothing" and that in Germany "a less unusual mobilization is actually going on than in France and Poland". On July 25, he asked Halifax to make the following points clear to the Polish ambassador in London, Count Raczynski, and to pass them on to his government in Warsaw: 1) Hitler was the "best appointed German" for Poland. 2. the "Polish idea was completely unreal that, even if Poland was initially overrun in a war, its allies would eventually win, resulting in an even greater Poland".

On July 28, Henderson again urged that a modus vivendi between Danzig, Poland and Germany had to be found, because the current anomalous situation could

not be prolonged indefinitely. The reincorporation of Gdansk into East Prussia in a form that at the same time left Poland's economic and strategic rights untouched would "strengthen Poland immeasurably". He wanted to "pledge all his money that Hitler does not want war".

On the same day, Halifax wrote a reply letter to Henderson which, contrary to his custom, contained no salutation and was signed only "Halifax". In this letter, the ambassador was reprimanded for his "misjudgment" of Poland. The situation was seen differently in London . . .

In his self-confident reply of August 1, 1939, Henderson did not deviate from his conviction that the British "preventive war" against Germany, "which the people do not want", was reprehensible, despite the rebuke he had received. Again he points to Poland's disruptive attitude as a consequence of the British guarantee, as well as once more to the Polish "unpleasant persecutions and provocations". The ambassador proudly defended himself against the suspicion that he could leak even the slightest information about the real British intentions to the Germans. That was why he had "perjured himself" throughout the summer of 1938, without anyone in Germany believing his untrue claims. Even in 1939, he "did not tell them" what he had written to Halifax about Poland. - How
wrongly did Weizsäcker judge Henderson in his memoirs when he believed that Henderson had forgotten his "affiliation" to the country of his birth, as he had stated for himself and Attolico (Italian ambassador). (Emst v. Weizsäcker, "Erinnerungen", page 181.) (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 320.)

A whole world separated the two diplomats von Weizsäcker and Henderson, for it would simply have been impossible for the English ambassador to stab his own government in the back for the benefit of a foreign power, even though he was of a different opinion on the matter than his superiors in London. Like all his fellow countrymen, he acted according to the well-known English motto: "Right or wrong - my country !" ("Right or wrong - my country!")

"In order to achieve détente, Henderson pleaded on August 1, 1939, that "Chamberlain should rely more on the British people, who rejected the war, than on the so-called 'Inteligentsia', which was only pursuing its own obscure aims. He claimed to know the country on this side of the Rhine and the man who led it better than the British could on the other side of the river, and once again urged that serious talks be held with the Poles because Colonel Beck was no longer the master of his country. The ambassador again implored Halifax to facilitate Hitler's retreat on the Danzig question, instead of presenting this as a weak yielding on Germany's part." (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 320 ff.)

But Henderson's insistence, based on a sense of justice and political reason, has become just as hopeless as the German leadership's proposals, however magnanimous and accommodating, for a peaceful settlement of the dispute over the return of Danzig to the German motherland. The British leadership had finally decided to break with Hitler after catching up in terms of armaments in the previous

year and believed that it could count on a revolution in Germany, which would in all probability even spare it a war. With this decision, the German conspiracy was fully convinced that Hitler and his government, which was firmly anchored in the German people, could only be removed by war or the threat of war. This fundamentally similar view then led to a joint approach which was to have a decisive influence on the impending climax of the crisis.

On August 18, 1939, British Ambassador Henderson requested a personal letter from Chamberlain to Hitler, in which England's position and obligations were to be clearly outlined. Chamberlain's letter, dated August 22, was sent in accordance with the agreement between Henderson
and the conspirator Weizsäcker, it was handed over to Hitler on August 23 by Henderson in the presence of Weizsäcker on the Obersalzberg. Chamberlain confirmed in this letter that he had already taken certain "measures" in the event of war and emphasized that "whatever the nature of the German-Soviet agreement, it cannot alter Britain's obligations to Poland". In his letter, he referred to the fact that Britain had been accused of not expressing its position clearly enough in 1914 to prevent a world war, an accusation which, as is well known, was contained in Weizsäcker's secret message of September 7, 1938.

Annelies v. Ribbentrop goes on to write that "Chamberlain's entire letter shows how much Weizsäcker's suggestions had triggered the 'alarming effect' in London and how much Chamberlain hastened to declare that he would intervene in a German-Polish conflict". At the end of his letter, he ambiguously proposes the "commencement of direct negotiations between Germany and Poland on the questions existing between them" in order to reach an agreement which, "if concluded, would be guaranteed by other powers", and offers to "mediate" the effective implementation of such guarantees to the best of his ability, as Cadogan had suggested. (File VII, Doc. 200 annex)

Hitler replied to Chamberlain's letter on the same day. This reply concludes with the words:

"The German Government has become aware that the British Government intends to carry out mobilization measures whose clear character as directed solely against Germany is established by your own statements in your letter to me, Mr. Prime Minister. This is also said to apply to France. Since Germany has never intended to take military measures, whether against England or against France, except those of a defensive nature, and - as already emphasized - has never intended and does not intend to attack England or France in the future, this announcement, as you confirm in your letter to me, Mr. Prime Minister, can only be a prospective act of threat to the Reich.

I therefore inform Your Excellency that I will order the immediate mobilization of the German Wehrmacht if these military announcements materialize.

The question of dealing with European problems in a peaceful manner cannot be decided by Germany, but primarily by those who, since the crime of the Versailles Dictate, have persistently and consistently resisted any peaceful revision . . . I

have fought all my life for a German-English friendship, but have been convinced by the behavior of British diplomacy - at least so far - of the futility of such an attempt. If this were to change in the future, no one could be happier than I."

When the British mobilization was nevertheless carried out, Hitler also ordered military measures in Germany on the evening of August 23 and at the same time gave the order to invade Poland on August 26. He had not yet decided on this before the threats contained in Chamberlain's letter and before the British mobilization measures.

When Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop had returned from Moscow with the German-Russian non-aggression pact in his pocket and had taken note of the correspondence between Chamberlain and Hitler, he suggested to Hitler that he should make one last attempt to reach an agreement with England and ask Henderson for a meeting. Hitler accepted Ribbentrop's proposal and Henderson appeared at the Reich Chancellery at 1.30 p.m. on August 25 for the meeting, where Hitler presented him with the offer of friendship in the presence of Ribbentrop and asked him to fly to London the same day so as not to lose any time for the start of the German-English negotiations.

Henderson informed his government of Hitler's offer by telephone and telegraph and warned it of the dangerous path it had now taken. The British response to the German offer of friendship to England was the ratification of the Anglo-Polish Guarantee Treaty, which took place at 5.30 p.m. on August 25 and was immediately announced to the world public by radio. England thus clearly and openly indicated that it did not want a peaceful solution.

In order to facilitate the final explorations for a peaceful solution, Hitler canceled the advance order of August 23. This led to a connection between Göring and the Swede Birger Dahlerus, whom Göring believed he could use as an honest broker and mediator with leading English business and political figures and thus contribute to a settlement with England.

On August 7, a meeting took place between Göring and English economists in the presence of Dahlerus, who was anything but an honest broker. Proposed by the conspirator Trott zu Solz, he had been put forward by Chamberlain in order to cause a rift between Hitler and Göring and, above all, between Hitler and Ribbentrop. In addition, Chamberlain, like the conspirators, was keen to keep Henderson, as well as Ribbentrop, away from the decisive talks.
Henderson, whose entire ambition was to achieve a German-English compromise.

On August 26, Chamberlain's agent and confidant of the German and British "friends of peace", Dahlerus, delivered an informal letter from Halifax to Göring without a salutation or signature. Believing that this was proof of the British government's desire for a peaceful settlement, Göring took the document to the Reich Chancellery that same evening to present it to Hitler. Hitler then received the Swede Dahlerus in the night of August 27 for the first and only conversation he had with Chamberlain's envoy. On the morning of August 30, Dahlerus delivered the original text of the German reply note from the previous evening to the British

Prime Minister and also informed him of the main content of the new German proposals. They were divided into the so-called 16 points, "which were to be handed over to a Polish plenipotentiary in Berlin on the same day".

Annelies v. Ribbentrop reports on the course of these and other negotiations: "On August 28, Henderson was sent back to Berlin with the official British reply to the German offer of friendship and handed it over to Hitler in the presence of Ribbentrop that same evening. In the conversation that followed, Hitler told the ambassador emphatically that he was still "willing to negotiate if there was a Polish government that wanted to be reasonable and really had the country in its hands". .. Hitler agreed to an exchange of population between Germany and Poland and said that he could only give an answer to the other points in the British note after careful study, which he would give to the ambassador in writing the next day. Henderson answered Hitler's question as to whether England was prepared to accept an alliance with Germany1 as follows: 'I personally do not exclude such a possibility, provided that the development of events would justify it'." (DBFP VII, No. 455.)

Although Henderson was able to base this personal opinion on the official text of the British note to Germany of August 28, which stated in black and white that the British government "fully shared" Hitler's desire for friendly Anglo-German relations, his reply caused considerable agitation among British politicians and earned him a sharp rebuke himself. (DBFP VII, No. 477.)

On August 29, Sir Orme Sargent, Ivone A. Kirkpatrick and Lord Halifax definitively rejected the German offer of friendship, in contradiction to the wording of the official British reply note of the previous day.

Vansittart emphatically agreed with this disastrous decision by Chamberlain's closest associates and also protested to the Prime Minister about Henderson's reply to Hitler, quoted above. He demanded that the Ambassador be warned "not to allow himself to be drawn down such a dangerous road again by the Germans" - namely, that he personally believed in the possibility of an Anglo-German alliance - because, in Vansittart's view, the very idea of a Anglo-German alliance would finish England off in the United States and could create the worst possible impression both there and in all friendly countries.....

In response to the official British note, the German government accepted the British demand for "direct negotiations between Germany and Poland" on August 29. It accepted the international guarantees, which were to provide the necessary economic and political security for "the existence of the Polish state, which would then continue to exist". Hitler decided to make his promises solely under the impression of the written communication he had received from the Royal British Government that the latter also wished to conclude a friendship agreement on the basis of the indications given to Ambassador Henderson on August 25.

In conclusion, the German note states: "Incidentally, the German Imperial Government has never intended in its proposals to attack vital Polish interests or to call into question the existence of an independent Polish state. Under these circumstances, the German Imperial Government therefore agrees to accept the

proposed mediation of the Royal British Government to send a Polish personality with full powers to Berlin. It expects this person to arrive on Wednesday, August 30, 1939.

The Reich Government will immediately draw up proposals for a solution acceptable to it and, if possible, make them available to the British Government before the arrival of the Polish negotiator." . . .

When the Cabinet discussed the German request for a Polish negotiator, it was Chamberlain who called this request "the most unsatisfactory matter in Hitler's reply and considered it essential to make it perfectly clear that we will not yield on this point". (Jan Colvin, "Admiral Canaris -Chief of Intelligence", page 244.)

What did Chamberlain mean by "this point" on which he would not yield? He meant that no German-Polish talks should take place that could bring about an agreement between Berlin and Warsaw. Although Chamberlain had offered to act as a mediator
and Hitler now accepted this offer, the Prime Minister himself sabotaged any possibility of a Polish plenipotentiary coming to Germany. His entire statesmanship consisted of blaming Germany for the failure of the German-Polish negotiations, although he alone was responsible for this. Dahlerus, who had meanwhile returned to London, was also informed that it was completely unreasonable to expect a Polish plenipotentiary in Berlin. After Hitler had brought the promised German reply to the British note of August 28 to Henderson's attention in the presence of Ribbentrop on the evening of August 29, the ambassador had to be "on his guard", as instructed, not to allow himself to become entangled in friendly talks again. . .

In response to Henderson's telegraphic report that Hitler agreed to immediate direct negotiations with Poland, and to this end invited an envoy from Warsaw to Berlin on August 30 to "secure a lasting friendship with England," Halifax dispatched to Henderson what Dahlerus already knew: "We shall give careful consideration to the reply of the German Government, but it is of course unreasonable to expect that we can bring a Polish envoy to Berlin today, and the German Government should not expect it. It would be good if you would make this known immediately through the appropriate channels to the relevant authorities. We hope to receive your reply this afternoon." Forwarded to Warsaw, Rome and Paris. (DBFP VII, No. 504, m. Sp.)

Ribbentrop was not one of the "proper" authorities in Germany for London, who were to be informed through "appropriate channels", because then it would have had to be the German government instead of "proper authorities". The British, however, were informed by State Secretary von Weizsäcker and his circle (of the conspiracy), who therefore already knew in the first hours of August 30 that a Polish plenipotentiary would *not* come to Berlin at the instigation of the British. The uninformed Imperial Government, on the other hand, waited for the Polish negotiator until after midnight. Since even then the flight time from Warsaw to Berlin was only one and a half hours, the Polish government would have had almost a whole day at its disposal to appoint an authorized representative, instruct him and

send him to Berlin on time.

By passing on the above Halifax instructions to Warsaw as well - in addition to Rome and Paris - Colonel Beck knew that he was not allowed to send an authorized representative to Berlin. The fact that Chamberlain deliberately prevented his own demand of August 28, according to which German-Polish negotiations were to begin immediately, shows the full extent of his
of his deception. He abused his self-appointed role as mediator only to thwart the establishment of contact between Berlin and Warsaw until the outbreak of war. The German conspirators had given him decisive help in this when they introduced Chamberlain to the Swede Dahlerus in order to sabotage the real negotiations desired by Hitler. (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 3 53 ff.)

The British ambassador Henderson, who, unlike the conspirator von Weizsäcker, did not think for a second of sabotaging his country's foreign policy, complied with the instructions of his superiors in London - although he detested the way his government was acting - to inform the "relevant German authorities", i.e. the German conspirators, whom he knew better than his colleagues in London, immediately.

The conspiracy reacted promptly and sent its trusted Major Ewald von Kleist-Schmenzin to the British embassy in Berlin on the morning of August 30, where he revealed the following military secrets to the British military attaché:

"Hitler has forced the General Staff to change the elaborate plan against Poland, according to which Warsaw was to be attacked on a broad front from East Prussia in a north-south direction, in conjunction with the advance of their main forces from Bohemian Moravia and Western Slovakia in a north-east direction towards Cracow . . . The new plan consists of a direct offensive from Pomerania and the Border March against Warsaw. Brauchitsch declared that a war on two fronts was out of the question because Poland's resistance was considerable and the new plan could not bring a quick decision. The Siegfried Line is only strong in places, which has been proven by tests. Weak points include Freiburg, Saarbrücken and Aachen. General Staff fears that a breakthrough through the Siegfried Line is possible... Hitler suffered a nervous breakdown after my visit to Henderson on August 23rd . . The General Staff wants to take advantage of Hitler's nervous state to make a military coup possible, but it must first be sure that England will not give in... If the General Staff knew that an attack on the West Wall was certain, it would strengthen its position... The mood in the German air force was good, but not in the army, and it was the army that would ultimately decide events ... . . Generals Hammerstein, Beck and Rundstedt had been given independent high command posts, and these were the men in whom the General Staff had confidence ... The German concentrations would take place in the areas of Landsberg, Schneidemühl, Schlochau . . . If the General Staff were finally convinced that Ribbentrop's reports about England were false, this would favor the situation of the dissident elements.
stantiate. Passed on to Warsaw." This report was passed on by Henderson to Halifax

in a telegram sent by telephone. (DBFP = Documents on British Foreign Policy VII, No. 546.)

As Annelies v. Ribbentrop further reports, Chamberlain "had Kleist-Schmenzin's treasonous secret information passed on to Colonel Beck on the following day, August 31, in order to maintain Poland's resistance to the German will to negotiate . . .

This intervention by Kleist-Schmenzin did not remain without influence on the British reply note of August 30, which was in all respects a rejection of the German negotiating wishes. England sought new excuses to prevent German-Polish contact from being established. Henderson, on behalf of his government, which had called for direct German-Polish negotiations just two days earlier, now had to suggest to Ribbentrop that the German negotiating points be handed over to the Polish ambassador to be forwarded to Warsaw." . . . (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "The War Guilt of the Resistance", page 357ff.)

"After Hitler had announced the German sixteen negotiating points to Poland by radio at 9 p.m. on August 31," according to Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "the Polish government scornfully rejected Germany's moderate offer via the Warsaw radio station and appealed for arms. This was followed by the invasion of Poland by German troops in the early morning of September 1, 1939.

Mussolini's efforts to convene an armistice and peace conference on September 5 after the outbreak of the military conflict are also well known. Germany and France accepted this proposal. Only England demanded that the German troops be withdrawn from Poland beforehand. The secret of this English behavior was Chamberlain's waiting for the putsch and the British hope for an Italian change of front. . .

While the German conspirators were constantly urging L *i* ondon to insist on his firmness towards Germany, Ribbentrop, with Hitler's agreement, intervened once again via Dr. Fritz Hesse (press attaché at the German embassy in London) to prevent the outbreak of a German-English war, which he regarded as inevitable as a result of the German-Polish conflict . . . After the German-Polish conflict had broken out, Ribbentrop contacted Hesse by telephone shortly after 8 p.m. on September 2, but without giving his name:

'You know who is speaking here; please don't call me by name. Please go immediately to your confidant - you know who I mean - and explain the following to him: The Führer is prepared to leave

The Führer is prepared to leave Poland again and to offer compensation for damage already done on condition that we receive Danzig and the road through the corridor if England takes over the mediation in the German-Polish conflict. You are authorized by the Führer to submit this proposal to the English Cabinet and to begin negotiations immediately. Emphasize once again that you are acting on Hitler's express instructions and that this is not a private action on my part, so that there is no misunderstanding in the matter." (Fritz Hesse, "Das Spiel um Deutschland", page 210.)

Sir Horace Wilson made the following record of his conversation with Hesse:

"Copy
3. Downing Street,
Whitehall

Hesse (who had left Berlin before the events of Thursday) was instructed by Ribbentrop to contact me shortly after 8 p.m. to ask whether the British government would be prepared to authorize me to travel secretly to Berlin and meet him and Hitler. I saw him - Hesse - at about 10 p.m. and asked him the purpose of the meeting. The answer I got was - to discuss the whole situation, man to man, including the Polish question.

I told Hesse that the British view had been expressed in the Prime Minister's statement in the House of Commons and that I would ask him to tell Ribbentrop that under no circumstances would H. M. Government be prepared to enter into any discussions with the German Government until the German troops had been withdrawn and the status quo restored. Thereafter the position would be as expressed in the Anglo-German exchange of notes just published.

(Signed) H. J. W. 2. 9. 1939"

In his conversation with Hesse, Wilson laid the English cards openly on the table. In words that were already in Ribbentrop's main report A 5522 and the "Conclusions", Chamberlain's alter ego stated: "England cannot allow the hegemony of another power on the continent without perishing or removing the foundations on which her world empire and her world prestige rest. We fought Napoleon for 22 years, we will fight Hitler and Germany for 100 years if necessary . . . " Horace Wilson himself did not believe in his bombastic words, for he was convinced that the conspirators would put their coup plans into action in the shortest possible time, eliminate Hitler and stop the war.

Hitler and stop the war. England therefore did not need to fight a Hitler's Germany for 100 years.

When Dr. Fritz Hesse published the conversations he had had with Sir Horace Wilson on Ribbentrop's behalf in 1954, his account was met with general disbelief and indignation. In a review of Hesse's book "The Game for Germany", under the heading "Legends of Hitler's Foreign Policy", the court historian of the Institute of Contemporary History, Helmut Krausnick, commented ironically:

"Hesse's sensational I lem,Auftrag "can therefore at best be a hyped-up deceptive maneuver, indeed it will have to be relegated to the realm of fables as long as no better witnesses to its credibility can be found."

"This sensational assignment by Ribbentrop to Hesse would probably always have remained 'in the realm of fables' if the record of Wilson's conversation had not been placed in the files of the British Cabinet Office and only forwarded to the Foreign Office Library on January 23, 1963. After the British files were made accessible to historians in 1969, this document turned up in a volume of unpublished

material in which it should not have been classified according to the usual British registry method. It was found as a subsequently attached document among the Dahlerus papers. Another method of hiding important historical material, as was done with Ribbentrop's memorandum "London A 5522"." (Annelies v. Ribbentrop, "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 374ff.)

"On September 2, 1939", according to the further report by Annelies v. Ribbentrop, page 3 82, "Halifax addressed the well-known 'certain circles' in Berlin on Chamberlain's instructions for the second time within three days, informing them ahead of time that an ultimatum would now be issued to the German government. The instruction to Henderson reads verbatim: "You do not need to inform the German government of this, but you can pass it on immediately to certain circles in order to give them as much time as possible to reply." (DBFD VII, No. 735.)

The "reply" expected from London was the initiation of the promised upheaval in Germany, which Chamberlain hoped for on the night of September 3rd and which would have spared him his precarious declaration of war on Germany. But the German traitors remained inactive, as Henderson had always warned . . .

At 9 a.m. on September 3, Henderson gave the Reich government a two-hour ultimatum to withdraw the German troops from Poland. Fifteen minutes later, Chamberlain addressed the House of Commons and announced to the world that 'the German leaders could not be believed' and that the situation had therefore become 'intolerable'. Immediately after 11 o'clock he announced on the radio that Great Britain was in a state of war with Germany because the Reich government had not answered the note before 11 o'clock. ('German-English secret connections', page 566f.)".

Chamberlain had now launched his war against a reinvigorated Germany in accordance with the traditional British foreign policy postulate of "balance of power", which the British leadership, completely unaware of the global threat posed by international Bolshevism, refused to abandon. The fact that this war was not a "cheap" one was due to the simplicity with which the British "friends of peace" fell for the many false reports, suggestions and whispers of the German conspirators.

The hard core of the conspiracy, however, had its war as a clearly stated precondition for the overthrow of Hitler and his government.

As sly and insincere as Chamberlain could be towards his political opponents, in his private, confidential statements he evidently felt the need to be honest and frank, as can be seen from his diary entry of September 10, 1939, which is reported by his biographer Keith Feiling in "The Life of Neville Chamberlain", page 417f. There it says in two sentences:

"I believe that Hitler was earnestly seeking an agreement with us and that he was equally earnest in working out proposals -which were later published over the radio

What I hope for is not military victory - I doubt very much whether it is possible - but a collapse of the German internal front."

According to Mrs. v. Ribbentrop's report, page 383, captured German files filmed in the USA show, among other things, how disgracefully Poland was treated by the

British government. It states:

"After the defeat of Poland in September 1939, Marshal Rydz- Smigly declared to Romanian dignitaries that only two days after the beginning of the war the Polish High Command had lost contact with the armies operating individually due to the effect of the German air force. . . England, however, had officially informed the Polish government that 1500 English airplanes were on their way to Poland. However, none had arrived... Furthermore, the Western powers had given assurances that the French had broken through the Siegfried Line in two places and had penetrated deep into German territory.... Rydz-Smigly declared excitedly that the official communications and promises of help from the British had been relied upon. President Moscicki's remark that Poland had finally wanted to accept Germany's conditions but had been prevented from doing so by England was particularly bitter. Because
his ministers had counted on English help, they had finally allowed war to break out."

How the French statesmen were fed with misleading false reports of the German conspiracy before and after the outbreak of war is conveyed quite revealingly by the then French Foreign Minister Georges Bonnet, who writes in his memoirs "Before the Catastrophe":

"I was to spend ten more days (from September 4 to 15, 1939) at the Quai d'Orsay. I was surprised to discover what good ground the dangerous illusions spread among the public had fallen on and how they had taken root there. They were expecting an easy and quick victory. It must be admitted that a great deal of information from abroad led us to believe that our opponent was already in a very bad way. I received such news directly or through our ambassadors, who dutifully forwarded it to us with every reservation.

In addition to the well-known stories about the striking German workers and the soldiers who refused to fight, we were repeatedly told of an imminent assassination attempt that had already been prepared and was supposed to bring down National Socialism. As in 1938, we were constantly told about this in the last week before the war. If you summarized everything, the words were: "Hold out and the German generals will overthrow Hitler! Haider has already taken his leave."...

Meanwhile, Great Britain and France, far from "supporting the German demands", declared war on Germany on September 3, 1939. The way was clear for the "military coup d'état" that had been so authoritatively announced . . .

People liked to tell themselves that all they had to do was wait quietly in the Maginot Line for Hitler's certain downfall, an opinion that the war would considerably strengthen in the period from September 1939 to May 1940. For my part, I warned my interlocutors about these dangerous messages, some of which were sincere, but many of which came from German agents. We had already heard them in 1938. Some generals even claimed at the Nuremberg Trial that they would have booted Hitler out if Chamberlain had not come to Berchtesgaden at that time. They described in unheard-of detail what they had prepared against the Führer and -

one wonders why they had not carried it out. . I note, however, that we were told in the same way and with the same precision in 1939 and 1940, before and after our defeat, of military conspiracies against the Führer. Hitler nevertheless lived until 1945. The assassinations that were not carried out
are like battles that were not fought: they would have been crowned with success. In truth, Hitler's regime could only be overthrown by a decisive military victory of the allies. But, as it turned out, it took years to achieve victory. So in 1939 I was convinced that we had entered a war that would last a very long time and be very hard. This was also the opinion of Lord Halifax." (Georges Bonnet, "Before the Catastrophe", page 307ff.)

Shortly before the Anglo-French declaration of war, a few days after the meeting of the Standing Committee, the French Chief of Staff, Gamelin, at a dinner given by the former President of the Paris City Council, Le Provost de Launay, was astonishingly optimistic about the Allies' starting position in the impending war. The French historianJ. Benoist-Mechin reports on this in his book "Did Adolf Hitler want war in 1939":

"General Gamelin had asked one of the guests what he thought of the German Wehrmacht, and the latter had replied that step by step the Wehrmacht had come so far that today it represented a force that would be dangerous to underestimate, although he could not state with certainty the number of divisions it was capable of leading into the field. The general had replied with a patronizing smile: "Let me tell you something that may surprise you: whether the Wehrmacht has ten, twenty or a hundred divisions is quite irrelevant, because if we are forced to go to war against Germany, I will probably never have to deal with the German army . . . '

As this explanation caused some astonishment, he explained it with the following words:

'It's quite simple: the day war is declared on Germany, Hitler will fall. Instead of defending the borders of the Reich, the German army will have to march on Berlin to put down the unrest that will break out there. The troops in the West Wall will offer little resistance. We will push into the German Reich like butter.1

The listeners would have been less astonished if they had known what we know today: the Rue Saint-Dominique (the War Ministry) and the General Staff were flooded with tendentious reports intended to make an impression on the Generalissimo. One of these said:

'In Lörrach, on the night of August 28-29, flyers are said to have been posted saying: "Down with Hitler!", and in Constance posters are even said to proclaim: 'We don't want war, we want peace!

There is said to be great unrest among the Hamburg working class. During talks with Alsatian farmers in Baden, the latter are said to have asked them to say in France that "they have had enough of their Führer". They are also said to have complained about the soldiers' behavior towards the civilian population and their property. . . The population was already back in the dark days of 1917 . . The crowd gathered in front of the Reich Chancellery expressed more fear than enthusiasm. Old

fighters have made seditious speeches . . . There was a bad mood among the reservists ... Only in East Prussia and in Nuremberg, the stronghold of National Socialism, has patriotic sentiment remained completely intact... Reports from other areas speak of confusion and oppression among the population.... Now Germany seems to be battered by the war of nerves . . . General von Brauchitsch is said to have offered his resignation . . . It is also reported that the German-Russian pact has led to such lively disputes among Hitler's supporters that the National Socialist Party will soon face a split."

Another document was even more revealing:

.General Haider, the Chief of the Army General Staff, resigned yesterday and was replaced by General von Reichenau. General von Brauchitsch is of the same opinion as Haider, but he will remain in his post (as commander-in-chief of the army). Haider has now taken the same stance as General Beck in 1938. His resignation will not be announced publicly . ..

As experience has shown, the western fortifications (Westwall) are only strongly developed in places. There are weak points, especially in the areas of Freiburg, Saarbrücken and Aachen. The General Staff fears the possibility of a crack in the West Wall.

Hitler has had a nervous breakdown in Berchtesgaden. . . Dr. Bunck from Munich has been called to his bedside. Hitler is recovered, but the doctor is still at his disposal. The General Staff hopes to take advantage of Hitler's nervous state to enable him to carry out a military coup d'état, but first the General Staff wants to be sure that the War Ministry will not drop him. Mr. von Ribbentrop's office assures the General Staff that England will force Poland to give up Danzig and supports the German demands for an eastern border satisfactory to Germany. If the General Staff were certain that the West Wall would be attacked, its position would be greatly strengthened. . . "

The origin of these documents is too obvious for us to dwell on them. They are in line with what Jacques Heilbronner, who was sent on a fact-finding mission to Germany, described as the opinion of Prime Minister Daladier.

Prime Minister Daladier reported as the opinion of former Chancellor Wirth:

'Fear nothing: before a month has passed, Germany will be begging for peace!"1" (J. Benoist-Mechin, "Wollte Adolf Hitler den Krieg 1939", page 346ff.).

The following facts also characterize the situation shortly before the Anglo-French declaration of war:

The English ambassador Henderson had thanked the Swede Dahlerus for being able to pass on the wording of the very moderate German proposals to London and that he had every reason to believe that his government would pass them on to Warsaw as quickly as possible. Then, however, he asked the Swede for the further favor of delivering the German proposals to the Polish ambassador Lipski himself in order to gain time.

Dahlerus complied with Henderson's request and, accompanied by the British embassy councillor Forbes, went to the Polish embassy, where he read the text of

Hitler's memorandum to Lipski. But Lipski only listened to him indifferently and replied to Forbes, who was puzzled by this:

"Why should I show the slightest interest in the German notes or offers? I have no reason to negotiate with the German government. I have now lived in this country for five and a half years and I know very well what is going on here. If there is a war between Germany and Poland, a revolution will break out in Germany and the Polish troops will then march on Berlin." (J. Benoist-Mechin, "Did Adolf Hitler want war in 1939", page 505).

Benoist-Mechin continues on page 516: "For several days, Downing Street (the seat of the British government) and the Polish embassy have been drowning under a flood of letters, petitions and anonymous correspondence: 'Surely you will not want to give in at the very moment when we are about to reach our goal?

These letters were backed up by imperious appeals from influential parliamentarians such as Winston Churchill, Brendon Brakken, Duncan Sandys, Hugh Dalton, Lloyd George, Harcourt Johnston and others. They had got wind of the Italian proposal and exhorted the Polish government and the British cabinet to hold out, to refuse to enter into any negotiations and not to fall into the dictators' trap*. At the same time, they asserted that the best way to save the peace was to put Hitler before the necessity of war, .because if you put him before this necessity, you will bring about his downfall*. All this opinion-making was effectively coordinated." In his footnotes on the subject, Benoist-Mechin explains: "It is astonishing that Churchill took this position, given that he regarded the Franco-Polish

Polish alliance as a dangerous error. He had accused government policy of developing 'almost overnight the readiness to take on an obviously imminent war of the greatest magnitude and under the worst possible circumstances'

It is equally astonishing that the former wartime Prime Minister of 1914-1918 (Lloyd George), who had advocated a referendum in the corridor area at the peace conference, took such a strong stand against a settlement of the German-Polish dispute on the same basis that he himself had called for. This turnaround can be explained by the fact that, in his view, it was no longer about Gdansk and the Corridor, but about putting an end to the further expansion of German power. 'There is no place in this world for the British Empire and a Greater German Reich', he said at the time, as did most of his compatriots." (J. Benoist-Mechin, "Did Adolf Hitler want war in 1939", page 516).

Gamelin had already been in contact with the conspiracy since the summer of 1937, when he, like Marshal Petain and Prime Minister Daladier, was visited by Goerdeler.

"One year after the outbreak of war," according to Annelies v. Ribbentrop in "Die Kriegsschuld des Widerstandes", page 389, "the German ambassador in Paris, Otto Abetz, telegraphed to the Foreign Office on August 23, 1940, that the Foreign Minister Bonnet, who had resigned in 1939, had made the following 'interesting statement' on the assessment of the French war guilt:

A year ago today, a meeting took place between leading officials of the Quai d'Orsay and the French generals. In this meeting on August 23, 1939, he had advised Bonnet to persuade Poland to adopt a flexible attitude towards Germany and, as a basis for negotiations with Germany, to recommend the cession of Danzig, the Corridor and Upper Silesia. In contrast to their attitude during the September crisis of 1938, General Gamelin and the other leading military officers had taken the view that one should not shy away from going to war because the Reich's military and international situation did not deserve the favorable assessment that Bonnet gave it. In this context, there was a report from a reliable source that General Georges - French Deputy Chief of the General Staff - who was otherwise regarded as sober, believed an agent's report received on August 30, 1939, according to which a "revolt" had been observed in the "Prussian"(!) officer corps during the military preparations against Poland."

It is clear from the above statement that the outbreak of the Second World War would not have occurred if the responsible attitude of the Prussian officer corps had been taken into account.

The French Foreign Minister Bonnet's responsible attitude, instead of succumbing to the whispers of German conspirators and counting on their coup d'état, as did the British government and the French General Staff.

A sober, unprejudiced view of the whole war guilt complex in connection with the German conspiracy can be summarized as follows: England's leadership did not want to give up its traditional continental power policy of "balance of power" under any circumstances and therefore had to strive for the overthrow of Hitler and his rule, because this was the only way to break Germany's political and economic power, which had become too strong again. For this reason, the help of the German conspiracy with the same goal of eliminating Hitler must have been tempting to the British leadership, as it could have spared them a military conflict; for without the existence of the German conspiracy, England would sooner or later have had to go to war against Germany in order to do justice to her "balance of power". It would certainly not have been difficult for the devious English politicians to break off this war under some pretext similar to the Polish guarantee.

For England, the elimination of Hitler was only a stage on the way to the destruction of German power on the continent, while the conspiracy had the elimination of Hitler as its ultimate goal, for motives that were not those of Germany's enemies.

Shortly after the declaration of war on Germany, it turned out that the British statesmen, having succumbed to the ominous temptations of the conspirators, were shamefully let down by them, because the overthrow that had been announced as a certainty did not take place as a result of the declaration of war. It was - incidentally - shameful for the British secret service, which had done an outstanding job in creating and consolidating the British Empire, to allow itself to be duped by the German conspirators.

In any case, the "quick and cheap" victory over Germany was over, only to have

to fight a long, difficult war instead, which ultimately cost Britain its empire.

In contrast, the hard core of the conspiracy, determined to go to extremes and the impossible, now had its much longed-for war, which, according to its wishes and will, had to lead to the defeat of its own country in order to finally be freed from Hitler.

The methods and means of betrayal and sabotage he used to achieve German defeat in the course of the war will be ruthlessly demonstrated in the next section on the basis of authentic evidence.

THE SABOTAGE OF THE CONSPIRACY IN THE GERMAN WARFARE

Sabotage on the northern, western and southern fronts

The fact that the hard core of the conspiracy did not shy away from sabotaging the warfare of their own country with the help of the most reprehensible means was already unequivocally brought to the attention of the German people in 1949 by the zealous advocate of the resistance, Professor of History Hans Rothfels, in his book "The German Opposition to Hitler". On page 199 it says: "Moreover, the German opposition found itself in the exceptional situation, or increasingly so since the outbreak of war, that the fight for the liberation of the fatherland was tantamount to the fight for its defeat."

On page 100 he wrote: "The head of the Abwehr, Admiral Canaris, foresaw as early and as clearly as anyone the doom to which the war of aggression would ultimately lead. But he was also convinced that Hitler's triumph would be 'an even greater disaster', and he did everything he could to prevent such an outcome." And he attests to the conspirators in the Army High Command, in the OKW and in the staffs of the army groups on page 101: "It can therefore be summarized that members of the German General Staff, who had initially tried in vain to prevent the outbreak of war, ultimately contributed to accelerating the inevitable defeat of their own country."

v. Schlabrendorff reports in "Officers against Hitler", page 47, on his intentions and those of his co-conspirators when Hitler was planning and preparing the invasion of England in the summer of 1940: "We were convinced that a successful invasion would have meant Hitler's domination of Europe. Our most urgent task was to prevent Hitler's success under all circumstances and by all means, even at the cost of a severe defeat of the Third Reich." This second sentence is missing in all later editions of Schlabrendorff's writing. It is quite certain that after the publication of his first edition, Schlabrendorff soon came to the conclusion that
he had revealed too much of the secret intentions of his conspiratorial circle.

A few hours after hostilities broke out between Britain and Germany on the morning of September 3, 1939, following the British declaration of war, the conspirator Fabian von Schlabrendorff carried out the first act of treason committed by the resistance during the war. Between 1 and 2 o'clock the same day, in the dining room of the Adlon Hotel in Berlin, he informed Sir George Ogilvie-Forbes, Chargé d'Affaires of the British Embassy in Berlin, that Hitler was likely to be arrested by Colonel-General Kurt Freiherr von Hammerstein-Equord.

During the general mobilization for the Polish campaign, von Hammerstein-Equord had been reactivated and given command of Army Group A, which was to be deployed in the 5th Army section. The plan of the conspiracy was to induce Hitler to visit Hammerstein's army in order to document the military strength of the Wehrmacht on the Rhine during the campaign against Poland. v. Hammerstein, who had his headquarters in Cologne, was determined to arrest and overthrow Hitler during his visit.

According to Harold C. Deutsch in "Conspiracy against the War", it seemed important to Hammerstein to "inform the Allies of his plan" in order to make them favorable to negotiations with a government after the fall of Hitler. "Hammerstein may also have assumed that informing the Allies would make an imminent attack on Germany less likely, so that there would be no problem of separating the war opponents, who were so bitterly opposed to each other.

Hammerstein - or whoever was advising him - thought about which members of the resistance had connections to the British embassy and came across Fabian von Schlabrendorff, who had been to London on a number of opposition missions and who maintained cordial relations with several British representatives in Berlin. Schlabrendorff, who had a law firm in Wiesbaden at the time, was informed by one of Hammerstein's confidants, Colonel Stern-Gwiadowski, and immediately agreed to take on the assignment."

According to Harold C. Deutsch, Schlabrendorff was "a descendant of Baron Stockmar - a close friend and personal physician of Prince Consort Albert and Queen Victoria - and had committed himself to the British government as he had donated Stockmar's written estate to it. (Fabian von Schla- brendorff, "The Secret War Against Hitler", page 95." (Harold C. Deutsch, "Conspiracy Against the War", page 51.)

But the expectations cherished by the conspiracy and by informed English circles were not to be fulfilled. Hitler, who

Hitler, who was known to have a keen sense of personal danger, canceled the promised visit after a few days and ordered Hammerstein's retirement. Hammerstein had already been dismissed by Hitler in 1934 because he was suspected of having close ties to the socialist trade unions and was therefore referred to as "the red general".

After the Polish campaign, in which the German Wehrmacht had crushed the enemy in twenty-seven days, the conspiracy planned another coup. On October 9, 1939, Hitler had ordered preparations for the Western Campaign, the "Fall Gelb",

which was deemed too risky by the Army General Staff and the army commanders, with few exceptions. However, Hitler rejected the advice of his generals and ordered the end of the deployment for the week after November 5th. Taking advantage of the confusion among the military leaders, the plan was to arrest Hitler and overthrow the government. Two armored divisions were to turn towards Berlin on their way from Poland to the Western Front in order to secure the city against the Waffen SS. Hitler was to be put on trial, declared insane and unfit to stand trial and committed to an insane asylum. Colonel General Beck was to take over the regency, while a provisional government was to be formed under the protection of the Wehrmacht. There were also plans to install a Hohenzollern prince as head of state. Behind the plan was the Canaris-Oster group, also known as the "Black Orchestra", which could count on the support of General Haider, Chief of the Army General Staff.

As the success of the coup d'état depended on whether England and France were prepared to give in on acceptable terms, secret contacts were to be established with the enemy in order to find out. The Canaris-Oster group took on this task, as their office alone offered the prerequisites for this.

"Oster had already betrayed the Third Reich once," writes the American author Anthony Cave Brown in his revelations "The Invisible Front", "when he revealed Hitler's intention to attack Poland to the enemy. Now he was preparing a second betrayal. This time it was about the 'yellow case' (Westfeldzug). Oster believed that if the Western powers prevented the implementation of the plan from the outset or caused the operation to fail, the legend of Hitler's invincibility would be destroyed, and this could lead not only to his overthrow but also to an early peace . . .

As liaison to the British, Oster asked the Munich lawyer Dr. Josef Müller to come to his office. He knew that Müller, a Catholic, was held in high esteem by Pius XII. He was also in contact with Prelate
Ludwig Kaas, the former chairman of the Center Party, who now lived in Rome, and the Jesuit priest Robert Leiber, a close confidant of the Pope. These relationships were invaluable to the Black Chapel and Oster, knowing that Müller was a staunch opponent of the Nazis, asked him to liaise between the Black Chapel and the British government through his friends in the Vatican. Without hesitation, Müller agreed to take on the task. Oster told him that once he had made contact with the British, he should inform them about the forthcoming German offensive in the West and find out what conditions they would be prepared to accept after the fall or removal of Hitler. Müller was aware of the dangerous nature of his mission and agreed with Oster that there was only one alternative: 'Either Hitler or us'. . .

In mid-October 1939, Müller reported to Canaris and Oster that the Pope was prepared to establish the link between the Black Chapel and the British government through the British Ambassador to the Holy See, SiirD'Arcy Osborne. His Holiness had, as Müller reported, declared his agreement with the words: 'The German opposition must be heard in Britain.'

The Pope wanted to ensure 'that Great Britain and France did not attempt to invade and occupy Germany, taking advantage of the unrest that could follow

Hitler's removal from power'. Müller was not received by the Pope because this could have been observed and reported. Instead, Father Leiber and Prelate Kaas mediated between the Pope and Müller. Around October 27, 1939, Müller was asked to 'come to Father Leiber's apartment in the Gregoriana in Piazza Pilota after dark. There Father Leiber told him that the Pope had heard from Sir d'Arcy Osborne that the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, had agreed that Sir d'Arcy Osborne should contact the representatives of the German resistance. Father Leiber said they should now make their proposals for the armistice.

The conspiracy could breathe a sigh of relief again, as the links with British 'friends of peace' had not been completely severed despite the state of war. The conspirator Helmuth Groscurth from the Canaris-Oster group wrote in his diary on October 20, 1939: 'The Pope is also very interested (in mediating peace) and considers an honorable peace possible. He vouches that Germany will not be betrayed as in the forest of Compiegne. In all peace negotiations one encounters the categorical demand for the removal of Hitler.'" (Anthony Cave Brown, "The Invisible Front", page 176f.)

Could the conspiracy now pay homage to the illusion that in its zealous lan-
the conspiracy could now indulge in the illusion that it had made good progress in its treasonous conspiracies with the enemy England, it was threatened by a great danger from the Secret State Police. Gestapo chief Heydrich had succeeded in recruiting the intelligent and ambitious monk Hermann Keller from the great Benedictine abbey of Beuron on the Danube as an informer, who had been trying for years to have Archabbot Raffael Walzer deposed. When Walzer was in Italy, Keller denounced him for alleged foreign currency fraud. During the investigations, Walzer was advised not to return for the time being, and Keller was allowed to administer the monastery until the primate of the Benedictines, Fidelis von Stotzingen, commissioned Dr. Josef Müller to investigate the matter. Müller succeeded in proving that Keller's allegations were fabricated, Keller was removed as prior and banished to the Benedictine monastery on Mount Zion.

There he was allegedly able to establish good relations with the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, which made him interesting for both the Stuttgart office of the Abwehr and Heydrich's SD. Keller also managed to return to Beuron, where the new Archabbot Benedikt Bauer kept him busy with confidential matters at the abbey, which brought him into contact with the SD. According to Harold C. Deutsch, Keller managed to persuade the SD not to demand harsh punishment of the monastery in the matter of foreign currency offenses and several arrested Beuron monks were released.

After the outbreak of war, Keller worked full-time for the Abwehr, for which he was able to travel abroad, even though he still nominally remained a monk of Beuron and wore monastic dress. At the end of 1939, he met the Berlin lawyer Etscheit in Switzerland, who had brought Dr. Müller to Canaris' attention. "Mainly for the sake of Haider, who was friends with the lawyer, Canaris had sent him on a kind of fact-finding mission to Switzerland." There, Etscheit met the double agent

Keller, whom he already knew in passing, for an evening of drinking in a wine bar. On the understandable assumption that a monk must be an anti-national socialist and in the belief that he could recruit a new member of the resistance, he confided to the monk "that a conspiracy against Hitler was underway, led by generals like Haider, Hammerstein and Beck. Haider, he blabbed, had sent him to Switzerland to listen in, and a certain Josef Müller regularly traveled to Rome to prepare the ground for peace negotiations. Apparently overcome with tearful pity for the supposedly dreary life of "a poor monk", he even gave Keller a hundred Swiss francs so that he could occasionally spend a few pleasant hours with him."

Keller traveled to Rome to find out more about Müller's activities. Müller was also in Rome at the same time, where he was warned by the Benedictines in San Anselmo of the danger he was in. He hurriedly returned to Berlin to report to Canaris and Oster, while Keller had also traveled back to Germany to give his Stuttgart clients, the Abwehr and SD, the latest news. Fortunately for Müller, Keller reported to the Abwehr first. When Müller appeared for the second time at the Abwehr headquarters on Tirpitzufer, Oster and Dohnanyi presented him with the report from Stuttgart.

In this highly dangerous situation for the entire Black Orchestra of the resistance, in which it was a matter of to be or not to be, all the stops were pulled out to avert the worst. First of all, the co-conspirator and head of the Reic I hskriminalamt Nebe was alerted, who managed to get hold of Keller's report to the SD, which caused such a stir "that it gave Keller the honor of a conversation with Heydrich himself. As Nebe reported, Keller had not only told the feared SD chief everything he had elicited from Etscheit, but had also added embellishments, such as the claim that Müller even entered the Pope's private chambers during his visits to the Vatican. Mixing facts with speculation, Keller claimed that Dr. Müller acted as the Pope's personal courier, as well as that of the Benedictine primate and other named church authorities."

The conspirator I rDohnanyi summoned Keller, instructed to do so by Canaris, to recapitulate the essence of his conversation with Heydrich, at the end of which the latter remarked that Müller's arrest was now only a matter of days. In this seemingly hopeless situation, as so often, only the cunning and cunning Canaris could help. He sent for Müller and asked him to dictate a short report stating that "he had learned in the Vatican that a military coup had been planned in Germany shortly before the war to prevent an armed conflict. In his report, he was not to name Beck, but Fritsch, who could no longer be harmed as he had died in the Polish campaign. When Canaris demanded that Colonel General von Reichenau, who was known to be very fond of Hitler, should also be mentioned, Müller objected that this name had never been mentioned. Canaris replied that there were good reasons for this and that he should not worry. At his next meeting, Müller, who was surprised to still be at liberty, asked the admiral about the purpose of his report, whereupon Canaris gleefully told him that he had gone straight to Hitler with it and, with a serious face, had presented him with "the report of a particularly reliable agent in the Vatican".

When the Führer came across the name Reichenau, he had thrown the paper away with the exclamation
.Schmarren!1 away. Thus fortified, the admiral had gone that very evening to Heydrich, who lived near him. "Think of it," he said with a long face, "I thought I was bringing the Führer something special in the form of a report by Dr. Josef Müller, my chief agent in the Vatican, about a military coup. Then, after he had read it, the Führer threw it on the floor and said, Schmarren!"1 (Harold C. Deutsch, "Verschwörung gegen den Krieg", page 139ff.)

With a devious method, an almost certain catastrophe could be averted by the conspiracy, because the war had long since begun and offenses such as plots to overthrow the Führer, assassination attempts and treasonous conspiracies during the war were inevitably punishable by death. The same applied to all crimes of this kind, including, of course, subversion of military power and any sabotage of the war effort committed at the front, in stage service and in the armaments industry. This harsh penalty of the death penalty for the most serious crimes committed during the war is and was customary in all other civilized nations of the world and will have to remain so.

The Keller incident led to greater caution on the part of the Black Chapel, and the Vatican, as a neutral power, was also forced to exercise greater restraint, so that the talks with the British were concluded towards the end of January 1940. In total, the exchange of ideas consisted of around seven questions and answers or statements on both sides. The messages from the British side were mostly conveyed by Father Leiber, who passed them on to Dr. Müller verbally, or by writing them down on thick notepaper with the initials R. L. (Robert Leiber), which Leiber left behind in the Albergo Flora on Via Veneto, where Müller was living at the time.

Around February 1, 1940, Dr. Josef Müller brought the long-awaited reply from the British to Berlin. Father Leiber had handwritten down on a sheet of paper what the Pope had dictated to him as peace terms that Britain was prepared to negotiate with a government after Hitler's removal. "One evening at the beginning of February," says Deutsch verbatim, "Müller and Dohnanyi sat down together in the latter's apartment in a room usually reserved for Dietrich Bonhoeffer to draft the outline of a report on the dialog with London conducted through the Pope's mediation. In addition to Father Leiber's sheet of paper, they were able to rely on (1) cursory notes that Müller had made during his journey and (2) Dohnanyi's more extensive notes on sheets measuring about 10 x 18 cm, which had grown to a pile almost two centimeters high. After Müller had left, Doh-
nanyi dictated the final version of the report to his wife late into the night, and the next morning Dr. Müller skimmed over the twelve or so pages she had typed. Later, about three more pages were added about the Roman visits in February and March. The most incriminating of these was snatched by the resourceful Müller and swallowed when he was unguarded for a few moments during an interrogation in Prinz-Albrecht-Straße in 1944."

This document appears in the history of the resistance as the X-Report and was

compiled to incite the chiefs of the Army High Command (OKH) to mutiny. The name "X-Report" is due to the fact that Müller, the central figure of the Roman talks, was always called "Mr. X" in it. The paper described by Father Leiber, which Müller brought back from Rome, was apparently only seen by a dozen other people besides himself, while a more detailed document reproducing the original communication was made available to a larger group of people. Of this larger group, nine people allegedly survived the collapse of the Third Reich and more or less remembered what they had read. The group of interviewees includes Müller, Christine von Dohnanyi, Gisevius, Etzdorf, Liedig, Haider, Thomas, Huppenkothen and Sonderegger.

It is said that Huppenkothen, then a senior government councillor of the Secret State Police, was gifted with an excellent memory. His questioning regarding the territorial conditions of England produced the following picture: Austria's affiliation to the German Reich was to be dependent on a referendum, the Sudetenland was to remain with Germany, the German-speaking part on Germany's eastern border was also to belong to the Reich, while Alsace-Lorraine was not mentioned in the X-Report. In addition to the British demand for the elimination of the Nazi regime, the X-Report contained a British demand regarding the form of the new state to be created, which meant a decentralized Germany.

General Thomas delivered the X-Report to Chief of the General Staff Haider, who presented it to the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, von Brauchitsch, on the evening of the same day. Haider gave the most detailed account of his conversation with Brauchitsch in 1948 before the court: "I took this report, after I had read it through, to my commander-in-chief von Brauchitsch in the late hours of the evening. I did not present it. Rather, I asked him to read through this document at his leisure so that I could talk to him about it the next morning. The next morning I found my commander-in-chief unusually serious. He handed the paper back to me and said: 'You should have given me the
should not be presented. What is happening here is outright treason. This is out of the question for us under any circumstances. We are at war; establishing ties with a foreign power in peace is something we can talk about. In war it is impossible for a soldier to do so. Incidentally, this is not a battle between governments, but a clash of world views. So eliminating Hitler would do no good.1 He then asked me to have the man who had delivered this paper arrested and to give this piece of paper through official channels to where it belonged (OKW or SD). I replied to him at the time: 'If anyone is to be arrested, then please arrest me!'"

"This seems to have sobered Brauchitsch," reports Harold C. Deutsch in his book "Verschwörunggegen den Krieg", page 335f., based on his conversation with Haider on August 9, 1960, "because he said nothing more about arrest. In the course of the conversation, Brauchitsch suddenly took the X-Report, waved it around and shouted: 'What am I supposed to do with it - with this scrap that is without a signature and date? "These words, as Haider has repeatedly stated, also expressed some of his own doubts, and he apparently accepted Brauchitsch's brusque rejection

of the X-Report without much objection or any contradiction at all."

Haider's hatred of Hitler must have been boundless. By mid-October 1939, he had reached the point where "he was thinking of taking over himself and carried a pistol with him when he went to the Reich Chancellery." On October 31, he confided to Colonel Grosscurth, head of the Canaris Office, "in an emotional outburst with tears in his eyes" that he had been doing this "for weeks". When the author Harold C. Deutsch showed Haider the relevant entry in Groß- c ' urth's diary, the latter confirmed that it was correct; "he had carried a pistol with him many times that fall when he went to Hitler, and did so often in the three years that followed. In W 1 nniiza 1942 he had been on the point of using the weapon, but "as a man and a Christian" he had not been able to bring himself to "shoot down a defenceless man". He was also inhibited by the fear that the Nazis would take out their anger on members of his staff." (Harold C. Deutsch, "Conspiracy Against the War", page 210.)

On April 3, 1940, Oster, Dohnanyi and the then ambassador to Italy, von Hassell, had agreed to try to win over the highly respected General von Falkenhausen for his influence on Brauchitsch. Colonel Grosscurth was instructed to ask General von Falkenhausen, who was then Deputy Commanding General of Military District IV (Dresden), "to undertake a tour of the Western Front in order to mobilize a selected group of opposition-minded commanders, to mobilize them and to bring them together in a group.
commanders, including Leeb, Kluge and List. He was to suggest that they visit Brauchitsch with him and ask him to act or let others act..... As a cultivated aristocrat, Falkenhausen detested National Socialism and made so little effort to conceal the fact that he was never to be given a front command. He was particularly outraged by the planned attack on Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg; one of the warnings that reached Belgium had come from him." (Harold C. Deutsch, "Verschwörung gegen den Krieg", page 337.)

Deutsch refers to the testimony of Colonel Goethal I s in the Falkenhausen trial. Goethals was Belgian military attaché in Berlin in 1939-40.

Falkenhausen's tour of the Western Front did not take place because General Thomas had advised him against it.

In contrast, according to Heinz Höhne's report, Admiral Canaris had made his way to the commanders on the Western Front after the Polish campaign; "thus the Oster/Dohnanyi circle offered many an influential cross-connection when Canaris asked his chief of staff to help him prepare the big battle against the regime. The admiral was transformed. At last he saw a chance to strike out, and now he couldn't do it quickly enough. There was not an hour to lose, Hitler had to go* - this Canaris phrase, passed down by Haider, became a constant saying in the chief office of the Abwehr. The relationship between Canaris and Oster was reversed; until then the colonel had been the one pushing, now the admiral took the lead.

With a feverish thirst for action, he urged Oster and his men to use their conspiratorial connections. He himself sought out every accessible general in order

to win him over for a coup against Hitler. Canaris unilaterally and clearly played the role of instigator* vis-à-vis the inner circle of 'resisters', Haider later reported.

At the end of September, Canaris traveled with Lahousen to the headquarters of the army groups and armies in the West. The commander-in-chief of Army Group C, Ritter von Leeb, made no secret of the fact that he would support an action against the regime if the army leadership gave the order; Colonel General von Witzleben, the commander-in-chief of the 1st Army, one of the leading men in the preparations for the coup in 1938, also expressed his sympathy. Most of the other military officers addressed by Canaris avoided making a clear statement. -Even Reichenau, still an opponent of the western offensive, shied away, even if Lahousen preferred the cautious formulation in his later travel report that the colonel general had taken note of Canaris' warnings in a "far more cautious, but on the whole very thoughtful and intelligent reaction".
and intelligent reaction*. The response of Reichenau's Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Paulus, who later achieved dubious fame in Stalingrad, was clearer: He described the German mass crimes in Poland as .necessary for the war* and incidentally .withdrew to his purely military area of responsibility*.

Here Canaris already made it clear that the problem of a military-led uprising against the regime had not changed since 1938, but rather had become even more acute. The young officers, who were enthusiastic about National Socialism or at least influenced by it, did not allow the older generation of army leaders to make up their minds; but even without this pressure from below, the generals were frightened by the idea of a coup d'état against the Supreme Commander, at least as long as Hitler forced one victory after another for Germany. Even more inconceivable to them, however, was the idea of a coup d'état in the middle of the war - didn't that mean inviting the enemy to seize the country at this moment of weakness?" (Heinz Höhne, "Canaris - Patriot in the Twilight", page 367f.)

This question posed by Hohne concerns a core problem of the resistance. Officers belonging to the conspiracy had to know: A plan of overthrow and preparations for the removal of the leader of the state in peacetime mean high treason, to which nothing dishonorable is attached; attempts to overthrow in a state of war, however, are sabotage of the warfare of one's own country and thus in the eyes of honorable soldiers and citizens most reprehensible offenses, which are therefore punished with the highest penalty, as in all cultural peoples. Anyone who crosses the Rubicon in this matter becomes a traitor to the country, regardless of whether it is a one-off or a twenty-fold treasonous offense.

Heinz Höhne writes, "Every leader of a putsch had to fear that the Western powers would exploit the hour of inner-German confusion, perhaps even a civil war, to launch a major attack against the Reich... So, Oster reasoned, the Western powers had to be approached and a kind of declaration of standstill had to be obtained from them, if possible even a guarantee of the territorial integrity of a future Germany.

But how were the conspirators to contact their opponents without being accused of treason? Oster had an idea: a respected head of a neutral state, preferably Pope

Pius XII, had to convey the thoughts and considerations of the inner-German opposition to the Western powers. Canaris liked this idea, he knew the Pope, who had previously served as nuncio in Berlin; Canaris had often met him on his rides in the Tiergarten.

Müller agreed to go to Rome on behalf of the opposition. The lawyer was surprised that he was not taken to Canaris, in whose name Müller had been summoned to Berlin.

Müller had been summoned to Berlin on his behalf, but he was content to think that Oster was the real mastermind. In fact, Canaris left it to his chief of staff to make the connection to Rome and thus to the Western powers. Whether it was skepticism about the company's chances of success or a reluctance to make contact with the enemy - the chief of defense held back. He was only on hand when it was necessary to provide Müller with a credible cover for his secret mission." (Heinz Höhne, "Canaris - Patriot in the Twilight", page 371 f.)

Höhne is completely mistaken in this account, because he wants to make it credible that Oster could have circumvented treason by using the Pope to connect the conspirators with the enemy powers. No, making contact with the enemy through the Pope or any other person was absolutely treason and sabotage of the conduct of the war and also of the foreign policy of the Reich. Informing the enemy about the credible plan to overthrow the Reich, in which none other than Haider, Chief of the Army General Staff, and the highest military commanders were involved, meant the greatest moral strengthening of the enemy, who rightly did not think of making concessions in advance for the time after a successful overthrow.

Canaris liked Oster's idea and agreed with Dr. Josef Müller's treasonous deployment, which incriminated him in the same way as his chief of staff Oster and their helpers. The fact that Canaris was "only" there to give Müller "a credible cover for his secret mission" was an additional incrimination. Nothing else!

If one now takes a closer look at the result of Oster's idea, the X-Report, which was compiled by Müller and Dohnanyi, one basically encounters more illusion and deception than reality and reliability. Their wishful thinking precluded any attempt to investigate the true intentions of their English "friends of peace", only to realize after many years that the enemies were not waging their war against Hitler alone, but against the German people and Reich, as the conspirator Eugen Gerstenmaier famously admitted. So it must have remained hidden from them that the British statesmen did not trust the German conservative generals any more than Hitler.

Höhne confirms this by writing: "Osborne (British ambassador to the Vatican, the author) hastened to convey England's reply to the Pope; shortly afterwards Müller also knew how the British had reacted. The result: the other side remained cool and did not go beyond expressing polite interest in Müller's proposals. Osborne demonstrated what was really behind all the diplomatic platitudes when he met the Pope again on February 19. 'I merely said1,' he reported

he reported, 'if they wanted to overthrow the government, let them do it. I added: But if there was a change of government, I still did not see how peace could be

made as long as the German military machine remained intact.1

However, Müller turned the note on which Father Leiber had jotted down the disappointing content of the British reply into a concrete preliminary agreement with the British government, 'a kind of gentleman's agreement', as even historians of discerning judgment later thought, before the British government's files with their so different text came to light. The pressure to succeed apparently tempted the otherwise realistic lawyer Müller to grotesquely overestimate the British response. He happily rushed to Berlin at the end of February and infected Oster's already resigned friends with his crude optimism. Dohnanyi shouted enthusiastically: 'Now we can do it! Müller read from his notes in Dohnanyi's apartment. Dohnanyi then wrote down keywords that he used when he dictated a twelve-page memorandum about the talks in Rome to his wife that very night, as already mentioned: the 'X-Report', so called after Müller's code name . . .

What its author did not want to have gleaned from the British reply: England was in agreement with the retention of Austria and the Sudetenland, it gave Germany a free hand in the East. Later, Haider even recalled that the (no longer extant) X-Report had also stated that Germany would get back the eastern borders of 1914 as well as Alsace-Lorraine. After the war, Müller softened the blow by saying that some of the exaggerations must have been added to the X-Report at a later date; his notes had not contained them. In fact, the report was later repeatedly reworded...

Whoever may have manipulated the X-Report, the text seemed suitable for providing dissident military leaders with the desired foreign policy guarantees for a coup. The paper came at the right time, as rumors were once again circulating that Haider had recovered from the shock of November 5, 1939 and was looking for new opportunities for a coup d'état. Even Brauchitsch should not be averse to listening to his chief of staff this time." (Heinz Höhne, "Canaris - Patriot in the Twilight", page 386f.)

How Haider got a rebuff from Brauchitsch with the X-Report has already been described above. The report was obviously so badly manipulated that it was bound to arouse the greatest suspicion, even among the politically ill-trained German generals; actually surprising in the case of the conspirators of the Black Orchestra in the Canaris office, who were otherwise masters at manipulating agent reports for the purpose of deceiving and misleading the public.

deceiving and misleading the political and military leadership in the interests of the conspiracy.

The fact that the X-Report did not help to inspire the troop leaders to stage a coup was no reason for Colonel Oster, the most active conspirator, to resign. Driven by an unbridled, blind hatred of Hitler and convinced that the generals were shying away from a coup d'état, Oster allowed himself to be carried away into acts of treachery that must have been unimaginable for a soldier. Höhne writes about Oster's mental state and his actions: "If the military - Oster reasoned - shied away from a coup out of sheer faith in Hitler and an attack on the dictator also proved to be unfeasible, then there was only one radical means of freeing Germany's soldiers

from Hitler's ominous power of suggestion: In the next war adventure, the Wehrmacht and Hitler had to suffer such a severe setback that the myth of the Führer's invincibility was shattered and the opponents of the regime in the army finally found the courage to liquidate the Nazi system.

This setback theory had some supporters among a certain section of the top officer corps; Haider also thought similarly - the pessimistic assessment of the German offensive power made a defeat in the West appear all too certain. What distinguished Oster from the other opponents of the regime, however, was the fanatical uncompromisingness with which he aimed for a defeat in the attack in the West. He was not content to wait for the retreat; he wanted to speed it up, he wanted to actively help *ensure that the Wehrmacht suffered a defeat.* In practice, this meant revealing the plans and measures of the Wehrmacht leadership to the countries of Western Europe, which had unwillingly become Germany's enemies, and warning them in good time of the German attack. And the faster the new act of war came, the more certain was the chance that the offensive of the still unfinished Wehrmacht would get bogged down.....

Canaris wanted to prevent the new war, while Oster wanted to bring it about, because without this war a defeat for the Wehrmacht and the destruction of the Hitler myth were unthinkable. To put it in extreme terms: Oster feared nothing more than a peace that would preserve the Nazi dictatorship." (Heinz Höhne, "Canaris - Patriot in the Twilight", page 38f.)

"During the last few months," according to Harald C. Deutsch, "Oster had regularly informed the Dutch military attaché in Berlin, Colonel J. G. Sas, with whom he had been friends for years, about the offensive orders, which were repeatedly postponed by Hitler. Sas immediately passed on the reports he received from Oster to his Belgian colleague Colonel Goethals. On April 3, 1940, Oster informed his friend that he was certain that the invasion of Norway would be launched in the first half of the coming week (April 8-10).
However, he did not yet know anything definite about the attack in the west, but feared that it would be carried out at the same time as the attack in the north". He also asked Sas to pass this information on to the Danes and Norwegians and, above all, to British intelligence.

Sas passed the message on the same day by telephone to the adjutant of the Dutch Minister of War, Captain Kruls, with whom he had agreed a code. The following morning, he sent a coded telegram to The Hague in which he specified the danger to the Scandinavian countries of Norway and Denmark and requested that the report be passed on to British intelligence. After informing his Belgian colleague as usual, he went to the Hotel Adlon, where the Norwegian legation councillor Ulrich Stang was dining. When he casually asked Stang in the bar where he met him what he thought of the situation, the latter replied astonishingly: "Not entirely harmless; the English probably want to land in Norway." Sas replied: 'What, the English want to land in Norway? Don't you know that the Germans will land in Norway next Tuesday?" Stang replied with an incredulous gesture: "Impossible, nonsense!" Later, Sas

learned from Oster that Stang had turned out to be a Quisling Anh I änger, and when the members of the Norwegian legation left Berlin, Stang decided to return to his German-occupied homeland. Of course, he had not sent the slightest warning to Oslo.

On the afternoon of April 4, Sas went to the Danish legation to speak to Naval Attache Kjolsen. Kjolsen was dismayed and promised to have the news brought to Copenhagen immediately by courier. A few days later, the Danish government thanked him warmly, although it was problematic how much use the warning could be to a country that could not seriously defend itself against an attack. . The irony of history was that Oster's warning immediately reached the address where it could only reinforce the feeling of defencelessness, while it did not reach the two destinations where it could have brought salvation. London had not been informed either. Despite the otherwise close relationship with the Secret Service, the Dutch secret service had simply ignored the request for information from the British... Moreover, they (the Dutch) did not want to do anything that would give the Germans an excuse to accuse Holland of anti-neutrality actions if they found out about it. This consideration may also have played a part in the fact that nothing was done to ensure that Oslo received a warning from the Netherlands.

Incidentally, the authorities in The Hague reacted somewhat more positively to Sas' reports this time than on previous occasions. A contributing factor must have been
The fact that it was now spring, the season of 'spring campaigns', which has always demanded more caution in sensitive international situations, must have contributed to this. The armed forces on leave were recalled for April 9." (Harold C. Deutsch, "Conspiracy Against War", page 344 ff.)

Like the resistance advocate Harold Deutsch, Höhne is also eager to play down the consequences of Oster's betrayal report, writing: "But Oster was wrong, his own deed remained fruitless. The Dutch General Staff did not pass on Sas' information to British intelligence, the Norwegian Stang kept his government in ignorance, although the envoy in Berlin warned in good time; the Norwegian armed forces were only mobilized a few hours before the German invasion. And England's Home Fleet, followed by the troop transports by a day's length, sailed on April 7 without knowing the German attack dates. Hans Oster had risked his life and honor in vain.

With the precision of clockwork, the German invasion army set off in the morning hours of April 9, 1940, unstopped by any serious defenders in Denmark and Norway." (Heinz Höhne, "Canaris - Patriot in the Twilight", page 389.)

Contrary to Höhne's opinion, the occupation of Norway was considerably hindered and the German navy suffered heavy losses at the hands of British and Norwegian forces because they had been warned in good time. Höhne himself points out in his book "Canaris - Patriot in the Twilight", page 388, that Oster, apart from Sas, had the co-conspirator Dr. Josef Müller "alert his confidants in the Vatican" and assured him that "the attack against the north would begin between April 8 and 10".

Erich Kern leaves no doubt about the timely warning of the British and Norwegians by Oster's announcement of the date of the attack. In his documentation "Betrayal of Germany", based on the official minutes of the testimony of the Dutch Major General Gijsbertusjacobus Sas before the Dutch Documents Commission of March 16, 1948, he writes: "At the same time, he (Sas) warned the Danish naval attaché Kjolsen and the Norwegian envoy Stang. The Danish envoy, Chamberlain Herluf-Zahle, immediately passed the message on to Copenhagen, and the Danish government immediately informed the British government. Soldiers who had been granted leave were suspended at lightning speed, leave was recalled and the units were hurriedly brought into combat readiness. As a result, the German troops in both Norway and Denmark had lost the advantage of the element of surprise. If their operations nevertheless succeeded, they owed this in Narvik to the luck of the soldiers.
luck, which allowed the German ships to land before the British, and in general to their boldness, bravery and willingness to make sacrifices." (Erich Kern, "Betrayal of Germany", page 20.)

Thus - again in contrast to Hohne's opinion - it was indeed clear to Oster "that the days of 'Emil' (Hitler) were numbered. He was also encouraged in this by the gloomy assessments of the situation by the pensioner Beck, who in his isolation was admittedly increasingly in danger of losing touch with reality. Oster was expecting a certain setback in Norway. Müller found him bent over a map during a visit to the Abwehr headquarters; Oster pointed to a point in the North Sea to the south of the Norwegian coast and explained to him: "At this point, the British fleet will attack the German troop transports, and then everything will be over. "Hitler would not survive this defeat." (Heinz Höhne, "Canaris - Patriot in the Twilight", page 389.)

Canaris wished and hoped in the same way as his chief of staff, Oster. In a repeated meeting with Oster and his old confidant, Corvette Captain Liedig, he summed up: "We can only hope that the matter will be taken as seriously in London as it deserves to be, and that the British war leaders will do what we would do in their place, i.e. that they will make Hitler aware in an unambiguous manner, through appropriate measures by their fleet, of the dangers to which he is exposing his weak naval forces and his transport ships if he should dare to undertake the enterprise after all. I would like to think that the English will now initiate something like this with all possible speed." (Karl-Heinz Abshagen, "Canaris" page 253.)

In Hitler's directive on the Norway operation of March 1, 1940, it said in view of the far superior British naval power: "Their numerical weakness must be compensated for by bold action and surprising execution." (Cajus Bekker, "Damned Sea", page 92f.)

Well, the bold action of the naval command and its forces was beyond any doubt, but the surprise of the execution had to be denied them because of the betrayal of the attack date. The saboteurs of German warfare from the ranks of the conspiracy snatched the surprise factor out of the navy's hands and caused heavy losses of soldiers and ships.

Cajus Bekker reports in "Damned Sea": "The self-sacrificing resistance of the Norwegian navy shattered the fiction of the peaceful occupation". The Norwegians put up a fight against the invasion - however hopeless it may seem. And they knew how to defend themselves. At the same time as the events in Narvik - almost to the minute at 05.20 on April 9th. April - the drama in the Oslo Fjord unfolds several thousand kilometers further south.

In the course of April 8, the convoy (the three cruisers 'Blücher1', 'Lützow', 'Emden', the torpedo boats 'Albatros', 'Kondor', 'Möve', the 1st R. flotilla under Captain Lieutenant Gustav Forstmann with the eight scavenger boats R 17 to R 24 and the two whaling boats Rau 7 and Rau 8 under Rear Admiral Kummetz, the author) passes the Great Belt and the Kattegat. After several false submarine alarms, a real torpedo run at 19:06 near Skagen: she passes close to the bow of 'Lützow'. 'Albatros' turns into the bubble track and chases the attacker with depth charges.

It is the 'Trident' under Lieutenant-Commander Seale. She is part of the dense swarm of British submarines lying in wait in the Skagerrak and Kattegat. . . Trident' has already sunk the German 8000-ton tanker Posidania at noon. Now Commander Seale launches ten torpedoes at the 'Lützow'. This time without success.

Admiral Kummetz is warned. A message comes over the radio that two German steamers have been sunk in the entrance to Oslofjord. The British are also there ... Half an hour before midnight, the radio operators on 'Lützow' hear an order from the Norwegian Admiralty on Radio Oslo: 'Extinguish all fires immediately! Nothing more can be done with tricks. The destroyer 'Thiele' radios: 'A clear Norwegian defensive measure. A surprise incursion into the fjord therefore hardly seems possible any more'...

00.25 hrs. The fortress islands of Rauöy and Bolärne flanking the entrance to the Oslofjord lay a light barrier across the fairway. The German convoy passes through at 18 nautical miles, .Blücher' is nevertheless held fast by the searchlights and shelled from both sides with 15 cm shells. The German ships shine their powerful searchlights in the opposite direction - and the firing stops.

At the same time, the torpedo boat 'Albatros' under Lieutenant-Captain Siegfried Strelow is fighting with the Norwegian guard Pol III, which has also illuminated the convoy with its searchlights. The Norwegian fires at the 'Albatros', demands that she surrender and even starts ramming.

When Pol III also radios and reports the Germans, Strelow has to sink the fearless guard with artillery. Fourteen sailors are fished out of the water, the first prisoners in the Oslofjord. Now there can be no doubt that the Norwegians have been warned . . .

05.20 o'clock,,Blücher'rsignalisierta.HalbeiFahrt'. To starboard, only a few hundred meters away, lies the village of Döbrak. To port ahead is the fortress island of Kaholm. There is medium artillery on both sides, and heavy artillery on Kaholm: three older 28 cm guns. From Krupp Essen. The ships have to pass through this bottleneck. There is no other fairway. . Only
still 600 meters away, the cruiser glides towards the narrows at half speed. Immediately afterwards, Kaholm fires the first 28-cm salvo. 'Blücher' is completely

hit. A shell orbits over the bridge diagonally upwards against the foremar and mows down the anti-aircraft echelon. Lieutenant Captain Hans-Erik Pochhammer and all the soldiers in the vicinity are killed instantly. A second hit sets the hangar on fire with high flames. And the 15 cm shells from Döbrak hit the ship from the starboard side. .

05.21 h.;vTwo dull underwater detonations shake the heavy cruiser. Mines? The first officer, Frega I ttenkapitän Heymann, thinks of the enemy news sheet about Döbrak. It said something about mines in the fairway that could be detonated electrically from shore. But in fact there were two torpedo hits. Shot from an underground battery on Kaho 1 lm. . The torpedoes hit .Blüchers' heart, the engine plant . . . The chief engineer, Captain Karl Thannemann, immediately senses that nothing can be saved here... Everyone on board has to swim into the ice-cold water and the approximately 400 meters to land ...

According to the first officer's report, the German navy's newest cruiser capsized at around 07:32 on the morning of April 9, 1940... At the latest five hours before the catastrophe it was clear that the Norwegians could neither be surprised in a coup d'état nor were they willing to accept a 'peaceful occupation' without resistance. . .

In Bergen, the cruiser 'Königsberg', which had already been damaged by Norwegian coastal batteries, was attacked by British dive bombers and sank. On the way back from Kristiansand South, the 'Karlsruhe' runs into the British submarine and is torpedoed. After three hours of agony, this cruiser also sinks. High in the north, in Narvik, the 2nd Destroyer Flotilla under Captain Warburton-Lee advances unnoticed against the harbor bay in the early morning of April 10. The fire attack caught the Germans completely unprepared. The alarm is about to be sounded on the FdZ's lead boat, 'Wilhelm Heidkamp', when a torpedo hit tears the entire stern of the ship. Commodore Bonte is killed instantly, as are his 1st Asto, Corvette Captain Heyke, the unit engineer, Frigate Captain (Ing.) Maywald, and Lieutenant (V) Cruch- mann. Anton Schmitt' sank immediately afterwards. . . broken up by two torpedo hits. Roeder' and 'Lüdemann' (also destroyers) are damaged by English shells...

After Narvik, the German navy only had ten destroyers left. Ten of the 22 with which it had gone to war. The merchant ships used for 'Weserübung', the tankers and transporters, also suffered heavy losses." (Cajus Bekker, "Damned Sea", page 98ff.)

It is clear from the above report that both the Norwegian and British armed forces had been warned in good time by the treachery of the conspirator Oster and had been put on high alert before the operation began. The occupation of Norway, which was unavoidable in order to secure German iron ore imports from the Swedish ore mines, brought the German navy the first severe bloodletting of the war.

The fact that the Norway operation turned into a military victory despite heavy losses was a great disappointment for Oster and his co-conspirators, who had hoped for defeat with him. The army's Chief of Staff, Haider, and the commanders of the troops deployed for the Western campaign, who had been won over to the overthrow plan, were discouraged and resigned. But not Oster and his Black Orchestra tribe,

who, after the Polish campaign and during the preparations for Operation Yellow, never tired of influencing the higher military leaders in their favor, which meant nothing other than continued subversion of military power and defeatism.

The conspirator Erich Kordt, Ribbentrop's collaborator at the time, provides an insight into the events within the army, which were constantly communicated to the enemy, in his book "Nicht aus den Akten" (Not from the Files), page 356ff. "Finally, the General Staff in Zossen seems to be seriously preparing a coup d'état. It was to be triggered as soon as Hitler gave the order for the autumn offensive in the West. In mid-October, Etzdorf (Dr. Hasso von, liaison officer of the Foreign Office to the OKH in Zossen, the author) reported that, on Haider's orders, a staff, including the later Quartermaster General Wagner and several capable younger General Staff officers, had been put together to work out the course of military action against Hitler.

Etzdorf had emphasized the need for precise planning, the preparation of orders and appeals, as well as the immediate measures to be taken, and this time he did not seem to have fallen on deaf ears. The plan was now beginning to take shape for the first time since the outbreak of war. There seemed to be no more illusions in the General Staff as to what the higher military leadership expected if they followed Hitler's orders and failed in the offensive in the west. There could be no doubt that, in the event of failure, Hitler would direct all the popular anger at the generals responsible.

The reports from Zossen raised new hopes . . . A few days later Etzdorf reported that urgent danger was approaching. Hitler had sensed the resistance from the General Staff to his planned winter offensive. Some younger officers of the Luftwaffe, who acted as
liaison officers in Zossen had not remained unaware of the prevailing mood of opposition there. Hitler had been informed by Göring, and he had said that he was well aware of the spirit of dissent and defeatism that prevailed in Zossen, and that he would take brutal action at the right moment and eliminate the pests in the army once and for all. . .

The Zossen Action Group urgently advised that a new June 30th (suppression of the Röhm revolt, the author) should be avoided, to which the army leadership would now logically have to fall victim . . . "By once again breaking solemn promises and raping neutral states, Hitler wants to finally block the German people's path to a peace of understanding. He intends to prepare the same fate for the supreme command of the army as for Colonel General Fritsch. After their removal, he wants to put his insane plans, which involve a war against the whole world, into action.1 These statements were to form the core of an appeal drafted by the Action Group. Etzdorf, who came to Berlin from Zossen every day, asked me to help with the revision.

A memorandum that we hurriedly prepared and presented to the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, the Chief of Staff, as well as General von Stülpnagel and other leading military officers in Zossen at the end of October has been preserved by

chance - albeit only in fragmentary form. The fallen Colonel General Groscurth had buried it with other documents on his parents' farm. By handing over the memorandum, we had deliberately placed ourselves in the hands of those who took note of it. The high leaders did not have the authors arrested. This should have been expected if they had really been convinced supporters of Hitler at that time... The military leaders informed Etzdorf at the end of October that they approved of the memorandum's ideas."

At the end of October, Erich Kordt's sister-in-law arrived in Berlin and gave him the following written statement, which his English confidant, Professor Conwell Evans, had delivered to his brother Theo:

"We do not intend to exclude a Germany from its rightful place in Europe which wishes to live together in friendship and trust with other nations. On the contrary, we assume that no effective remedy for the ills of the world can be found that does not take into account the just claims and needs of all nations. When the time comes to indicate the outlines of a new peaceful settlement, N. C. (Neville Chamberlain) believes that there is little hope for the future unless such a peace settlement can be reached by negotiation and agreement.
can be reached. We did not enter the war with a desire for revenge, but only to defend freedom. We are not seeking material advantages for ourselves. We do not want anything from the German people that could hurt their self-respect.

Our aim is not only to achieve victory, but also to lay the foundations for a better international system, the purpose of which is to prevent war from being the inevitable fate of every generation. I am sure that all the peoples of Europe, including the German people, long for peace, a peace which will enable them to spend their lives without fear and to devote their energies and gifts to the development of their culture, the realization of their ideals and the improvement of their national prosperity."

In response to questions, Conwell Evans had assured him "that this declaration of Neville Chamberlain, intended for delivery, was a solemn undertaking which would be unconditionally honored by any trustworthy government which replaced the National Socialist regime".

Chamberlain's beautiful epistle above was pure mockery of everything the German people had to endure after their defeat. All the benevolent and magnanimous concessions of the British statesmen were nothing but the well-known siren songs which their propaganda had fiddled out to the German people in order to separate them from their leadership. It is regrettable enough that our conspirators fell for the great deceptions of their so-called friends of peace and built their plans for overthrow on them.

Sefton Delmer, the head of the British propaganda of lies against Germany, wrote with cynical frankness to the resistance and explained in his memoirs what was to be thought of British concessions: "It seemed to me quite possible that the generals saw this campaign of the soldier's radio station 'Calais' as support for their dream of a revolt against the Führer, which would then be followed by a separate peace with the

West. Of course, such a separate peace with the West was out of the question. But if "Calais" succeeded in enticing the generals to rise up against their supreme warlord by constantly emphasizing the priority of the eastern front, I would have no qualms of conscience. A general putsch, whether successful or not, even the suspicion of a general conspiracy against Hitler, would hasten Hitler's defeat. And it turned out that our efforts were rewarded here too.

In the summer of 1944, when I spoke to OttoJohn, the only survivor of the general conspiracy who had managed to escape abroad, I learned from him that the conspirators had actually heard our broadcasts and had received them at the exact time they had planned.
and had interpreted them exactly as I had hoped. I am sorry that the generals had to lose their lives on Hitler's meat hook. But I could not say that I felt any remorse because I had raised false hopes in them. For these men and their ilk had been the first patrons and promoters of Hitler's movement. They were the beneficiaries of his Third Reich. And they only rose up against him when it became clear that his war of conquest was doomed to failure." (Sefton Delmer, "The Germans and I", page 528f.)

Erich Kordt showed Oster the British statement he had received from Conwell Evans, who asked him to visit Colonel General Beck with him the next day in his private apartment in Steglitz. "Oster told me what you brought me from the Tommys," Beck began the conversation. "Beck continued the conversation and, following verbal explanations of Conwell Evans' message by Kordt, Beck said: "We are faced with a major decision. Of course, the army must not break up, because as soon as we become weak, we now have to reckon with those from the East."

When asked about his assessment of the chances of a western offensive, Beck explained: "It has to get stuck, I can't say where, but my forty years of military experience tell me that it will get stuck. The historic counter-offensive will come." When I parted from Oster after the visit with Beck, he told me: "The offensive is scheduled for the 12th to 14th, it has to be in ten days, otherwise it will be too late. If only they don't go back on their oath, which, as they say, binds them to the living Hitler!" (Erich Kordt, "Not from the files", page 367ff.)

Oster's words about the oath "binding them to the living Hitler", as he himself reported, never left Erich Kordt's mind. He himself had made up his mind to assassinate Hitler. "It must not happen, this offensive in the West; if nothing else can prevent it, then it is my duty to act, my conscience told me. Over the next twenty-four hours I carefully considered the odds; I had better ones than any of our group. I was free to enter the Reich Chancellery at any time. I could get into Hitler's large waiting room easily and without being contacted. I could not hope for a conversation in pairs or in a small circle, but would Hitler not, as so often, step into the anteroom to call in visitors or give instructions to waiting adjutants and orderlies? Wouldn't that be a possibility?

"We have no one to drop the bomb to free our generals from their scruples," Oster told me on November 1, 1939, when I called on him again in his apartment. 'I have come to ask you for it.

1 He could not ignore the reasons for entrusting me with this task. 'You will receive the explosive device on November 11th,1 he said, shaking my hand.

When I arrived at my apartment, I drew up a statement explaining my intentions and expressing our hopes. It was a three-page document; I made two copies and addressed one to the American chargé d'affaires in Berlin, Alexander Kirk, and the other to Counselor Kappeier of the Swiss legation. I then spoke to three people about my intention. I asked my cousin Susanne Simonis, with whom I had shared joys and sorrows for many years, whether she would be willing to deliver the letters to the addressees if it happened. She was willing. "Whoever acts now, acts rightly1 , she told me. She did not dissuade me and I did not hear a word of complaint from her. I also took my friends Hasso von Etzdorf and Albrecht von Kessel into my confidence.

On the morning of November 7, Etzdorf visited me in my apartment. 'There has been a serious setback1,' he said depressed. 'Commander-in-Chief von Brauchitsch has been to see Hitler to speak against the offensive. He almost showed him the door when Brauchitsch spoke of the youth's lack of fighting spirit. Hitler accused the army leadership of cowardice and as a result the bold courage of men in front of royal thrones was decidedly diminished.1-"Only Hitler will command the offensive. It will not take place without him, and this offensive must not take place. I have been promised the explosives1, I replied. . .

The next morning my cousin brought me the news that there had been an assassination attempt on Hitler (in the Bürgerbräukeller on November 8). But he seems to be unharmed1. I did not reach Oster until the 10th. He assured me that the military front had not carried out an attack . . . In the late afternoon of the 11th I went back to Oster's apartment in Wilmersdorf, Bayrische Strasse 9. He received me in a depressed mood. 'I have some sad news to tell you. I can't give you the explosives. Immediately after the Bürgerbräufarce, the Himmler-Heydrich company began a 'people-proof' investigation. All laboratories, including the Quenzgut, are to indicate where explosives have recently been delivered. Even I can't get anything at the moment without a plausible reason. The goods are under the control of Department II of the Abwehr. The chief would certainly help, but we need an inspector, and he can't get one without arousing suspicion.1Oster was extremely agitated. Not a word was said for a few minutes. Then I said quietly, 'Then you have to try it with a pistol, the attack in the West must not take place.1

Kordt, don't commit an act of madness, you haven't got one percent chance.
chance. You cannot see Hitler alone. But in the antechamber, in the presence of all the adjutants, orderlies and visitors, you will hardly get the shot. We still have time. The date of the attack has been postponed. Supposedly it's the weather, but perhaps Brauchitsch's warnings are still having an effect. New date in a fortnight's time."

I didn't try it with a gun. "It's over," I said to my cousin that evening and asked her not to pry into me with questions. Life went on. Hitler postponed the western offensive seventeen times until he sent the troops into the fire on May 10, 1940. Twice more I went to Oster's apartment with the same request when a new date was

imminent. I asked the head of the Zossen action group, Groscurth, to help me. I didn't get what I asked for. Certainly my friends, who had to think about the aftermath, would have had a harder time than I did. If no military putsch had followed and Himmler had been able to continue his rampage, it would certainly not only have been my immediate friends and those who provided the explosives who would have fallen victim to the Gestapo's revenge. When the war came to an end, my resilience waned." (Erich Kordt, "Not from the files", page 369ff.)

Erich Kordt and his brother Theo, German chargé d'affaires in London until the outbreak of war, continued their treasonous conspiracies with the British until the spring of 1940. "My brother (Theo), who had come to Berlin for meetings in mid-December and again in February, had reported on conversations he had had with Convell Evans in Bern on December 18, 1939 and again on January 27, 1940. Understandably, the British side began to grow impatient. In order to be able to give Convell Evans an authentic explanation of the situation, my brother had asked him to come back to Berne a few days later, while he wanted to go to Berlin himself." (Erich Kordt, "Not from the files", page 379.)

Kordt writes that the members of the Zossen Action Group made another attempt in March to prevent the western offensive by means of a coup. "But they lacked the momentum that had been present in October and November. Etzdorf tried to make the waverers in Zossen aware of their responsibility. . . I went to see Canaris and Oster. "No slogan, no mood," said the white-haired man. "None of the commanders who are to lead the campaign in Norway are ours, they are all loyal followers. The general staff in Zossen are not even allowed to draw up the plans," said Oster. "But the campaign will fail," he added, "and this time Hitler bears sole responsibility. But the campaign was not to fail. Hitler was once again lucky." (Erich Kordt, "Not from the files", page 379.)

In order to give a proper idea of the much-mentioned spirit of Zossen, where the Army High Command (OKH) was based, the following overview is intended to show in which offices and departments of the OKH conspirators were active.

Haider, Franz, Colonel General, Chief of Staff of the Army;
Heusinger, Adolf, General, Chief of the Operations Department of the Army;
Stieff, Hellmuth, Major General, Chief of the Army's Organization Department;
Klamroth, Reinhard, Retired Colonel, Organizational Department of the Army;
Lindemann, Fritz, General der Art. with the Chief of Staff of the Army;
Wagner, Eduard, General der Art., Quartermaster General of the Army;
Count von Stauffenberg, Claus, Colonel i. G., BdE Chief of Staff;
Klausing, Friedrich-Karl, Captain, Adjutant to Count von Stauffenberg;
Haeften, Werner Albrecht von, retired first lieutenant, ordinance officer with the BdE;
Fellgiebel, Erich, General of the Army Intelligence Corps;
Gehlen, Reinhard, Colonel i. G., from 1.4.1942 Dept. Head of Foreign Armies East, previously Head of Group East in the Operations Department of the Army;
Frhr. von Roenne, Alexis, Colonel (retired), Group Leader in the Department

Foreign Armies East, later Head of Foreign Armies West;
Olbricht, Friedrich, General d. Inf., Chief of the AHA (General Army Office);
Wagner, Siegfried, Colonel, Chief of Department of the Army AHA;
Bernardis, Robert, Retired Colonel, AKH/Stab;
Hayessen, Egbert, Major i. G., AHA/Staff;
Merz von Quirnheim, Albrecht, Retired Colonel, AHA/Staff;
Freytag-Loringhoven, Wessel von, Colonel (retired), Head of the Army Department;
Schräder, Werner, Colonel, Group Leader of the Military Affairs Department;
Rathgens, Karl-Emst, Retired Colonel, in the Army General Staff;
Smend, Günther, Retired Colonel, Adjutant to the Chief of the Army General Staff.

The following members of the conspiracy were in the High Command of the Wehrmacht (OKW):

Canaris, Wilhelm, Chief of the Office of Foreign Affairs/Abwehr;
Oster, Hans, Major General, Chief of Staff to Admiral Canaris and Head of Dept. III in the Foreign Affairs/Abwehr Office;
Hansen, Georg, retired colonel, head of the foreign department in Admiral Canaris' office;

Dohnanyi, Hans von, Reichsgerichtsrat, in Dept. III in the Office of Admiral Canaris;
Thiele, Fritz, Lieutenant General, Chief of Intelligence;
Thomas, Georg, General, Head of the Defense Industry and Armaments Office;
Meichssner, Joachim, Colonel i. G., Chief of the Organizational Department of the Wehrmacht Command Staff;
Klamroth, Johann-Georg, Major d. R., WFSt.

Of the 30 officers named above, 26 were sentenced to death after July 20, 1944 for high treason or treason against the country, or for both offenses.

The overview reveals the frightening extent to which the OKH in particular was corrupted by the conspiracy.

Since it was mainly conspirators in leading positions who were involved, it is easy to imagine how widespread defeatism was in these groups of the officer corps, which naturally had to spread to the staffs on the fronts that belonged to the large reactionary General Staff.

It must be obvious that no operational plan for the Western Campaign with any prospect of resounding success could be expected from the Zossen General Staff, because there were forces at work there who either did not want Operation Yellow at all or longed for defeat.

It was therefore not surprising that there was no operational mastermind in Zossen who could have thought of bringing the modern armored weapon to full effect. This strategist of stature, however, was von Manstein on the staff of Army

Group A, which was led by Colonel General von Rundstedt.

General von Manstein submitted a deployment plan to the OKH, the development of which was described by the later Chief of Staff of the Army, Colonel General Heinz Guderian, in his "Memoirs of a Soldier": "The OKH - urged by Hitler to attack - intended to reapply the old so-called 'Schlieffen Plan' of 1914. This had the advantage of simplicity, but not exactly the attraction of novelty. So very soon my thoughts turned to a solution. One day in November, Manstein asked me to come to him and explained his idea of advancing with strong armored forces through Luxembourg and southern Belgium against the extended Maginot Line near Sedan, penetrating this fortified front and then completing the breakthrough through the French front. He asked me to examine his proposal from the point of view of an armored man. After a thorough study of the maps and on the basis of my own knowledge of the terrain from the First World War, I was able to assure Manstein that the operation he had planned was feasible.
planned operation was feasible. The only condition I had to impose was to commit a sufficient number of armored and motorized divisions to this enterprise, preferably all of them! !

Manstein then drafted a memorandum, which was sent to the OKH on December 4, 1939 with the approval and signature of Colonel General von Rundstedt. It was not well received there. Initially, the OKH only wanted to deploy one or two armored divisions for the attack over Arlon. There was an exchange of ideas about this. I considered this approach to be too weak and therefore pointless. A fragmentation of our already weak armored forces would have been the biggest mistake we could have made. But this was precisely what the OKH was about to do.

Manstein became urgent, but incurred the displeasure of the OKH to such an extent that he was appointed Commanding General of an infantry corps. He asked that he be given at least an armored corps; his request was ignored. So our best operational mind went into the campaign with a third wave corps, the brilliant course of which was largely due to his initiative.

In the meantime, an incident in the Luftwaffe forced the leadership to abandon the Schlieffen plan. On January 10, 1940, a Luftwaffe courier officer flew illicitly over the Belgian border at night with important files showing the planned deployment to Schlieffen and had to make an emergency landing on Belgian territory. It is not known whether he managed to destroy his papers. In any case, it was to be expected that the Belgians and probably also the French and English would have been aware of the deployment.

Manstein had also had the opportunity to explain his views on future operations to Hitler when he reported to him on the occasion of his appointment as Commanding General. Manstein's operational plan became the subject of studies, which found their visible expression for me in a war game in Koblenz on February 7, 1940." (Heinz Guderian, "Erinnerungen eines Soldaten", page 79f.)

Colonel General Dr. Lothar Rendulic also deals with the operational plan for the Western campaign in his memoirs and writes that von Manstein was inconvenienced

by the OKH, removed from the staff of the army group and appointed Commanding General of an army corps. Hitler had learned of this, had Manstein's plan presented to him and immediately recognized its advantages, which Hitler, as his great success showed, knew how to exploit. "Manstein's right idea - according to Rendulic - came to fruition through Hitler's intuitive grasp of the situation. Here we have an example of decisive intervention by Hitler that led to success. On
May 24, the battle in Belgium was over and the armies were preparing to attack the remaining enemy forces south of the Seine. There could no longer be any doubt that victory was complete, nor that it would take only a short time before it was won. Here, too, Hitler's prediction of August 1939 about the short duration of the campaign came true." (Lothar Rendulic, "Soldat in stürzenden Reichen", page 232.)

In David Irving's "Hitler and his commanders" it says on page 105f. about Hitler's victorious western campaign: "Years later Jodl was to write: 'Only the Führer understood beyond the general staff and military considerations the overall conception with all its factors of inner readiness to fight, propaganda, etc., a gift that shows not the general staff and military expert, but the strategist in Hitler/"

Once again, the conspirators' plan had failed! Oster's betrayal of the attack date to the Dutch military attaché Sas and the old Schlieffen plan, which was well known to the enemy, were to cause the Western campaign to fail. That was their conviction and their whole hope. The conspirator Fabian von Schlabrendorff confirms this with the following statement in his book "Officers against Hitler", page 48ff: "Part of the higher officer corps believed that the hour of salvation from Hitler's yoke would strike at the moment of a German offensive against France. They firmly expected the offensive to fail . . .

During this time, Henning von Tresckow, who was then a general staff officer in the staff of Army Group Rundstedt, repeatedly stated that "in the opinion of the vast majority of the German general staff and almost all army group and army commanders, the planned offensive against France would come to a standstill after a brief initial success".

After the victorious conclusion of the first phase of the Western campaign, Hitler's further military decision was of great political significance for the conspiracy. As Tresckow intelligently pointed out, internal political action, a blow against Hitler, could only be dared with a chance of success if the German offensive had failed. It was psychologically impossible to lead the victorious German army against Hitler. The psychological situation would be completely different if Hitler's offensive, against the advice of his generals, had failed.

Only a defeat of his own would break the spell in which Hitler held the German people and army thanks to Goebbels' propaganda and Himmler's Gestapo. If a defeat had preceded this, it could not be ruled out that hitherto aloof military personalities, such as

Fabian von Schlabrendorff, first lieutenant in the reserve, conspirator from the very beginning, eager helper of Major General Henning von Tresckow, who openly admitted after the war that the conspirators had seen it as their task "to prevent Hitler's success under all circumstances and by all means, even at the cost of a severe defeat of the Third Reich". Above: Fabian von Schlabrendorff before the outbreak of war. Below: von Schlabrendorff at a memorial speech in the Stauffenbergstraße courtyard in Berlin.

Werner Heisenberg, nuclear physicist and Nobel Prize winner, was jointly responsible for sabotaging the development of a German atomic bomb during the war.

z. For example, Rundstedt, could be won over to a military strike against Hitler.1" (Fabian v. Schlabrendorff, "Offiziere gegen Hitler", page 52.)

Heinz Höhne must also confirm that the always active conspirator Oster also did a great job in betraying the date of the attack for the Western campaign by alerting not only Sas but also his confidant Josef Müller to inform his "friends" on the other side of the impending offensive:

"Müller's information set the Vatican's diplomatic apparatus in motion. On May 3, Cardinal Maglione, Secretary of State, telegraphed to the nuncios in Brussels and The Hague to pass on the terrible news to the Belgian and Dutch governments. On May 6, Pius XII told the Italian Crown Prince Umberto and his Belgian wife. One day later, Pro-Secretary of State Monzini, who later became Pope Paul VI, summoned the diplomatic representatives of England and France. Osborne wrote to the Foreign Office: "The Vatican expects a German offensive in the West to begin this week.1

In the meantime, Noots (Abbot General) alerted the Belgian envoy Adrien Nieuwenhuys, who had already been visited by another compatriot, the Jesuit Father Monnens, who had in turn been informed by Leiber. The two clerics urged the envoy to inform the government in Brussels immediately, but Nieuwenhuys was skeptical (as was his British colleague, who had not been particularly impressed by the news from the Vatican). When Nieuwenhuys heard where the information had come from, he reacted with disbelief: 'No German would do such a thing!"

Only after much persuasion from Noots did he send a coded text to Brussels on May 2. 'I have... informant', reported the envoy, 'who states attack on Belgium and Holland is set for next week. Informant, always considered trustworthy by Nuncio, has asked compatriot to inform his government... It is understood that I am transmitting this information without any possibility of verification, all possible surprises are indeed conceivable.

When Oster met the Dutch military attaché for the last time to tell him the final attack date of May 10, he had one last request: 'Sas, blow up the Maas bridges for me! '" (Heinz Höhne, "Canaris - Patriot in the Twilight", page 392ff.).

After the war, the then Chief of the General Staff Franz Haider, who had charged himself with treason, made a statement about the consequences of such a betrayal, which is unprecedented in our history, which Peter Bor published in his book "Gespräche mit Haider" (Conversations with Haider). It states:

"What a distressing state of mental confusion must have prevailed that German men, in their hatred of the tyrant, could persuade themselves that they were serving the fatherland by joining forces with the enemy, by betraying military secrets! In their zeal and blindness, they overlooked the fact that the enemy took advantage of the betrayal, but still despised the traitor. How could the contempt not be incomparably greater among those who were betrayed, among their own countrymen? . . .

One must remember this when one hears how, after the catastrophe, someone sometimes boasted of having leaked military intelligence to the enemy. The transmission of an attack date, for example, to the enemy is, needless to say, of no use. For the attack will be carried out according to plan. However, if the enemy has been informed, and is therefore prepared, thousands of his own soldiers who leave their positions on orders and proceed will pay with their lives for this lack of conscience. . . " (Peter Bor, "Conversations with Haider".)

Oster's request to Sas to "blow up the bridges over the Meuse" seemed to have been successful. The Dutch had succeeded in blowing up both road bridges that crossed the Meuse to the north and south of Maastricht. The railroad bridge further north had also been blown up. "The fearless officers and men of Battalion z.b.V. 100, the 'Trojan Horse', had suffered heavy casualties." (David Irving, "Hitler and His Generals", page 117.)

After the collapse of France and the retreat of the British army from the continent in the summer of 1940, Hitler ordered preparations for the landing in England, the operation with the code name "Sea Lion". For Canaris, this order meant intensifying the activities of his secret service on the British Isles to such an extent that the Wehrmacht would have access to the intelligence essential for the occupation of Great Britain. But Canaris supplied only a few, and these were highly

unreliable.

The American writer Anthony Cave Brown interviewed Lieutenant Colonel Ulrich Liß, then in charge of the Foreign Armies West Division of the OKH, who told him: "You know, I met Canaris frequently in the course of Fall 'Gelb' and the intelligence planning for 'Seelöwe' . . . During the 'Yellow' case, I came to the conclusion that his offensive intelligence operations against France, Norway, Belgium and the Netherlands were exemplary. The same could not be said of what he did in connection with 'Sea Lion'. At the time, I believed that although he pretended to be making every effort, he was not acting with full conviction against England. We never got the news from England
England that we needed to correctly assess the strength of the British and their deployment."

What Liß says here is far too mild; for the efforts of the Abwehr to obtain intelligence from England were erratic, frivolous and sometimes even absurd. . .

While other members of the Black Orchestra thought of a coup d'état and ending the war through political negotiations, Canaris tried to put the Führer's ambition in its place by more subtle and realistic means . ..

On July 31, 1940, the head of the Wehrmacht Command Office, Jodl, said that "the German forces need only reckon with a weak British army that has not yet had time to learn anything from the lessons of this war."

But Hitler, puzzled by the lack of accurate news from Britain, took a different view. He believed that "we are facing an enemy that is ready to defend itself and determined to the utmost", a view shared by Canaris. He reported to the Führer that, in his opinion, "even the Dunkirk combatants are not in the mood to make peace".

On September 2, when the total strength of the British troops on paper amounted to 29 divisions, Canaris wrote in a report that the British had 37 fully equipped, combat-ready and trained divisions that were determined to repel a landing. They were determined, but there were far fewer and less well-equipped troops than Canaris wanted the Führer to believe. They were too strong for Hitler. He dropped the plan for a "Channel crossing"; the preparations for "Sea Lion"

gradually became a cover-up operation to camouflage his attack plans in the east. (Anthony Cave Brown, "The Invisible Front", page 199 ff.)

In his book "Admiral Canaris", the Englishman Jan Colvin expressed similar views to Anthony Cave Brown, writing: "Canaris' reports on England, however, had an unrealistic coloring. They greatly overestimated the strength of the British defense forces when they suggested that there were up to 39 divisions, of which perhaps only 20 were fully operational. In fact, however, no more than 16 divisions were available for the defense of the invasion area in September."

"Even in London, where the defense was studied in detail from a professional and non-political point of view, some experts were of the opinion that the Admiral was not worth his salary....

He had failed to report on the terrible weakness of the British Isles in June 1940, and had later made the British out to be much stronger than they actually were.
than they actually were." (Jan Colvin, "Admiral Canaris - Chief of the Secret Service", page 155ff.)

On June 30, 1940, Jodl presented a general assessment of the war situation, according to which the defeat of England could be achieved even without a landing on the British Isles if Gibraltar could be taken possession of. Hitler responded positively and Jodl was commissioned to plan and prepare the "Felix" operation, while Canaris was given the task of preparing the political and military pact between Germany and Spain with Franco. As is well known, Hitler traveled to Hendaye at the foot of the Pyrenees on October 23, 1940 in order to reach a personal agreement with Franco. To Hitler's great surprise and disappointment, an agreement with Franco could not be reached. Canaris, who had been unwilling to follow Hitler since the fall of 1939 and was urging his military friends to overthrow him, sabotaged the Gibraltar operation by sending Franco warnings. If Canaris used his agents and many Spanish friends in Spain to prepare the attack on the British fortress in terms of intelligence and military tactics, he could only have done so to deceive and camouflage his treacherous game.

"Canaris made sure", Brown reports in "The Invisible Front", page 205 f., "that

the Spanish refused to take part in the operation.

When the Spanish foreign minister and Franco's brother-in-law, Serrano Suner, was in Rome, Dr. Josef Müller contacted him. Canaris had sent him a message for the Spaniard. 'The admiral asks you to tell Franco to keep Spain out of the game at all costs. You may now have the impression that our situation is favorable. In reality it is desperate, and we have little hope of winning this war. Franco can rely on the fact that Hitler will not use armed force to invade Spain.*

In Madrid, Canaris told Franco to... ask for ten 38 cm guns for the attack against Gibraltar. Canaris knew that such heavy guns were not available. Back in Berlin, Canaris continued to pursue his subtle policy of discouragement, and when Suner returned to Madrid from a visit to the German capital, where he had held talks on Spanish-German cooperation, he reported to Franco that he had had the impression in Berlin that everything to do with Spanish affairs was in complete disarray*. He added: "One of the reasons for this confusion is the strange role played by Admiral Canaris."

The then State Secretary of the Foreign Office and co-conspirator Ernst von Weizsäcker writes in his "Memoirs", page 297: "Hitler
finally tried to involve Admiral Canaris, who was on the best of terms with the Spaniards, in his courtship of Franco. After consulting me, however, Canaris refused to be abused into a fraudulent deal with his Spanish friends. He advised them against it, and for good reason."

The Englishman Jan Colvin writes in "Admiral Canaris - Chief of Intelligence", page 163f.: "His (Canaris') adjutant, Lieutenant-Colonel Jenke, told me that Canaris had seen fit to discuss the German situation and Spanish interests with General Martinez-Campos, the Chief of the Spanish General Staff, and that 'he openly advised Spain to remain neutral and defend its neutrality'."

This sabotage by Admiral Canaris was bound to have decisive consequences for the German war effort. As the fortress of Gibraltar could not be taken, the Mediterranean remained largely open to the Western Allies for their operations with superior naval and air forces. The naval and air forces of the Italian allies proved to

be far too weak to prevent this. And the German Wehrmacht was unable to compensate for this Italian weakness due to the burden of the Russian campaign.

As a result, the planned seizure of the British island fortress of Malta could not succeed either, because the supply to it could not be stopped. Admiral Dönitz tried in vain to disrupt this supply by using submarine weapons. At the end of December 1941, he had to recall his last submarines from the Mediterranean after five boats had been lost in action against a single Anglo-American convoy without achieving any significant success.

But as long as Malta, this strong British base for naval and air operations, could not be taken, Rommel could not be provided with sufficient supplies, especially tanks and fuel, so that his African campaign, which had begun so successfully, was doomed to failure.

The treacherous behavior of Canaris is, as explained above, well documented by various sources. Höhne cannot ignore these facts either. In his book on Canaris he writes on page 406: "The biographer Abshagen found that for the admiral 'every new ally tied to Hitler's war chariot meant an extension of the senseless conflict', and historians like Hermann Graml also seriously believed that it was precisely in Spain in 1940 that Canaris had succeeded in 'counteracting the dictator's policy'. Unconvincing Hitler supporters also reflected such legends in their own twisted way; Canaris, they still accuse today, had sabotaged the Gibraltar venture and thus ruined the empire of unique opportunity.
and thus robbed the Reich of its unique opportunity to force England to make peace by closing the Mediterranean."

According to Höhne, Admiral Canaris' efforts with Franco, for or against the Gibraltar venture, are a contradictory complex: as early as mid-July 1939, Franco had - according to Höhne - turned the admiral down. "From then on, it seemed a foregone conclusion to Canaris that an allied Spain would be more of a burden than a help to Italy and Germany in the event of war." After the Western campaign, Franco "hastened to get to the German victory celebration and the distribution of the spoils" and dictated a "Dear Leader" letter to Hitler in which he assured him

"how great my desire is not to be far from your worries and how great my satisfaction to render you at any moment the services you consider most valuable". He then urged his Major General Vigön to take the letter to Hitler's headquarters, where he had to suggest with every word "that Spain was ready to enter the war".

The Gibraltar issue was played up by the Spanish. Franco's refusal to Canaris in June 1939 was forgotten. "The Spanish playing up the Gibraltar issue", Höhne continues, "attracted Canaris, who sensed an opportunity to make a name for himself and the Abwehr in front of Hitler", although he had ragingly renounced Hitler in the fall of 1939 and urged him to overthrow him. "How could he, now that England was still dazed by the defeat it had suffered, send his Brandenburgers to Spain by stealth and have them occupy the proud British fortress in a single night-and-fog operation? Without informing his superiors in the High Command of the Wehrmacht of his plan, Canaris had it checked whether 'Unternehmen Felsennest', as he called the operation, was practicable."

However, the reconnaissance of the area around Gibraltar by Canaris and his men did not paint an optimistic picture, and it was agreed that a surprise attack on the fortress had no chance of success. Nevertheless, a plan of attack was drawn up and submitted to the OKW. However, the overall situation of the war had changed considerably in Franco's eyes in the fall of 1940. England had not responded to Hitler's peace efforts and had decided to fight to the end, and Hitler had given up the invasion of the British Isles. "Despite Vigön's formal assurances, Canaris could not avoid the impression that the Caudillo had long regretted his rash move of June 1940. Even the aggressive speeches of the new Spanish Foreign Minister Ramön Suner, a brother-in-law of Franco, could not disguise the fact that the situation had changed decisively for the Caudillo: England continued to fight, and there was no sign anywhere that the Germans were on the verge of their final stand,
that the Germans were on the verge of their final victory." (Heinz Höhne, "Canaris - Patriot in the Twilight", page 408ff.)

Franco was enough of a realist and opportunist to switch to neutrality in the interests of his country, which alone could protect him from the superior naval

power of England. This was simply Franco's duty, especially as he had to reckon with a new flare-up of the Red Revolution in his country. But after the new overall war situation, it was not up to Admiral Canaris to encourage Franco in his negative attitude towards Germany and thereby stab his country in the back. His only duty was to use all his personal connections with Franco and his many other Spanish friends to ensure that Spain allowed the attack on Gibraltar. After all, Franco would have taken a risk and approved the march of German troops against Gibraltar, which could very well have contributed to the defeat of England, just as it was not without risk for Germany to stand by Franco in the most difficult situation in 1936.

There is no doubt that Canaris acted against the interests of his country with regard to Spain and Gibraltar from the fall of 1940 onwards, according to the evidence presented above. In connection with Canaris' relationship with Franco and Spain, there would be more questions to raise, but these would probably lead to speculation, for which there is no room here. It would also be a futile endeavor to explore the inner life of Canaris, who was already dependent on camouflage, deception and misleading the enemy through his work as chief of defense and who also had to cope with "several souls in his chest", of which Dönitz spoke.

Since Höhne in his writing about Canaris charges him with multiple acts of treason, the characterization of Canaris, which he describes on page 570 with the following words, is both incomprehensible and untenable: "What distinguished Wilhelm Canaris from most Germans was only the prophetic clairvoyance with which he sensed earlier than others that all this would end in catastrophe and ruin."

No, what fundamentally set our Germans apart from Canaris at that time was the self-evidence with which they almost without exception, as true patriots, fulfilled their entire duty on the fronts of the war and at home, while the admiral charged himself with the most serious acts of treason and sabotage.

At the end of October 1942, the Kriegsmarine reported that strong Allied convoys had been sighted in the Atlantic. There was no clear indication of where the convoys were heading or what the Allies' intentions were with this fleet movement. It was not until 2 a.m. on November 8 that Hitler was informed that the

Allies had landed in French North Africa.
landed. Hitler was visibly surprised, although there had been a number of leaks from the Allies and none of their operations had been as badly camouflaged as this one. "It should have been easy," Brown reports, "for the Abwehr to obtain reliable intelligence. Lieutenant Commander Donald McLachlan, a fleet intelligence officer who was in contact with the LCS (British Coordination Center for Camouflage and Deception, the author), describes the situation as follows:

To land first 90,000 men and later a further 200,000 with all supplies and armament in probable enemy territory and to bring them over 1500 miles from Britain, and over 3000 miles from America, w h o I ei they came within range of German and Italian air reconnaissance in Sicily, to assemble the convoys and the planes under the eyes of the Spanish off Gibraltar (and under the eyes of German agents), all this was only possible if the enemy was kept in the dark until the last moment about the operational objective of these forces entering the Mediterranean. But where was their objective?

Hitler only knew that these powerful forces were preparing for a major operation, and to attack them he had stationed 40 U-boats between Gibraltar and Dakar. But incomprehensibly, the German submarines had missed the Allied convoys, which entered the Mediterranean without any losses. Of all the possible targets here - Malta, Sicily, Sardinia, central Italy and southern France - French North Africa was the one the Germans least expected. How could Hitler have allowed himself to be so thoroughly deceived?"

Brown explains that and how the German war effort could be deceived by the fact that the British deception center "LCS" and its affiliated intelligence agencies used the plan under the code name "Solo I" to create the impression that the forces assembled in England were intended for use against Norway or France. And when this was no longer possible, the "Solo II" plan had to pretend that the Allied convoys assembled on the Atlantic were heading for Dakar in French West Africa. Their actual destination could be kept secret in this way.

Nevertheless, in Brown's opinion, "the Germans might have discovered the truth

had not a number of other circumstances worked in the Allies' favor. Firstly, the progressive disorganization of the Abwehr division. Canaris and his office had been unable to discover anything that contradicted the LCS's pretended objectives. In addition, the German B-Dienst,
the counterpart of Bletchley, had not managed to discover the secrets of 'Torch' by decoding radio messages. There was a very simple reason for this: the British, who were responsible for the fleet movements in the context of 'Torch', had the strictest security regulations for radio traffic in this enterprise. In addition, Ultra (decoding of radio messages using a newly developed universal device, the author) was already working at full speed at this time. Thanks to Ultra, the Allies knew what information the Germans had and where they got it from, and Ultra had learned that they knew nothing about the 'Torch' operation.

Had the enemy been duped and defeated by sleight of hand or cat-and-mouse games?1 Had such means been used in 'Torch'? The submarine packs that had secured the waters at the entrance to the Mediterranean had suddenly been withdrawn from here to pursue a convoy of empty ships coming from Sierra Leone on its way home to England. No one was more surprised than the commodore of this convoy, Rear Admiral C. N. Reyne. The U-boats tracked down the convoy SL 125 off Madeira and sank 15 ships in the course of a week... If the enemy had not been involved in this battle, he could have discovered and attacked the strong formation of troop transport and supply ships (Torch). Perhaps he would also have suspected the mission and destination and thus deprived our landing troops of the important advantage of surprise. Admiral Reyne later said that this was the only time he had been congratulated on the loss of ships... Because the Germans were busy sinking empty ships, the powerful convoys of Operation Torch - more than 1500 ships approached the Mediterranean - reached their destination - and only one was torpedoed. There were no bloody losses.

Torch was indeed a triumph, and what the Allies had achieved here in terms of ingenious deception and effective security measures could serve as a model for the attack against the Normandy coast.

Hitler had received no accurate information about the preparations for Operation Torch, but there were obviously people in the German intelligence service who were better informed than he was. After the war, it turned out that Captain Herbert Wichmann, Canaris' section chief in Hamburg - from where the Abwehr undertook the most important reconnaissance operations against Great Britain and the United States - had received a precise and accurate report from a first-class source, from which it emerged that French North Africa was the target of the operation.
was the target of the operation. Wichmann claimed that he had marked the report as very urgent and sent it to the OKW at the highest level of secrecy. What had become of this report? Nobody knew. In any case, Canaris does not seem to have reacted." (Anthony Cave Brown, "The Invisible Front", page 221 ff.)

In any case, Canaris or his representative was responsible for receiving Wichmann's secret report, and what happened to reports and messages in Department Z of the Abwehr under the hand of the main actor in the conspiracy, Oster, needs no further explanation. In any case, the British were not alone in having a central deception office LCS, the German Abwehr under the leadership of Admiral Canaris had the same, but with the vast difference that in the British deception office there were patriots who deceived the enemy in self-evident loyalty to their country, while in our deception office of the Abwehr traitors served their own leadership with false reports for years.

The cover for Operation Torch was not quite as perfect as Brown describes, as we know from Grand Admiral Karl Dönitz's memoirs: "However, the German leadership was very concerned about a possible American landing in Spain. An American occupation of West Africa through a landing in Dakar also seemed possible. All these suspicions were reinforced by the various messages spread by the enemy to mislead them. However, the German leadership had no concrete information about the gigantic preparations that were necessary for the planned invasion of North Africa. The German intelligence and counter-intelligence apparatus under Admiral Canaris failed completely in this case, just as it did not provide the German submarine command with a single useful piece of information

about the enemy during the entire war."

This is a damning verdict on Canaris, to which Dönitz adds the following characterization of Canaris elsewhere in his publication: "From 1930 to 1934 I was first admiral's staff officer at the North Sea Naval Station. The Chief of Staff of the Naval Station and my immediate superior in the early years was the then Captain Canaris. He was a very political person. We said of him at the time that he had several souls in his chest. We did not get along." (Karl Dönitz, "10 Years and 20 Days", page 247f.)

The above-mentioned "Ultra" method, with which the British were able to penetrate the German secret radio service, had been made possible by the development of a universal cipher machine, called the "Bombe" and "Turing machine", which was able to decipher the German Enigma messages immediately, even with every code change.

The Enigma was originally the patent of a Dutchman and was introduced by the intelligence general Fellgiebel of the OKH in the course of the development of the Wehrmacht in all parts of the Wehrmacht. This radio device was used to encrypt Hitler's instructions as well as those of Keitel, Jodl, Göring and Raeder, because it had the advantage that, if it fell into enemy hands, no messages could be deciphered without knowledge of the code keys used.

"The process of developing Ultra1 and discovering the secret of the German code systems," writes Brown, "was certainly a tremendous achievement; Certainly, the Enigma captured onU-l 10 in May 1941, together with the accompanying documents, enabled the British to extend their knowledge of German ciphering and deciphering methods considerably - but there are reasonable grounds for assuming that the Enigma keys were systematically and regularly passed to MI-6 (Military Intelligence in the British War Office) by the Black Orchestra conspirators from the beginning of the war. The intention behind this betrayal was - one may assume - to play Hitler's plans into the hands of his opponents in his own words, as he used the Enigma system for his secret radio messages.

The Allies were obviously supposed to take appropriate military and diplomatic

steps to counter him. Why should the Black Orchestra not reveal the Enigma keys? Since Hitler had announced his decision to go to war on November 5, 1937, the conspirators had revealed almost all of Hitler's secrets. If they gave the Enigma keys to the British, then this was the quickest and, for the conspirators, the safest way to communicate Hitler's intentions to them.

That is not at all unlikely. But again, one must ask who among the conspirators had both the motive and the opportunity to betray Enigma. Suspicion initially falls on General Erich Fellgiebel, the head of Wehrmacht intelligence liaison in the OKW, who was executed on September 4, 1944, and on his deputy, Lieutenant General Fritz Thiele, who was shot. Hitler was convinced that Fellgiebel and Thiele were in contact with the British, and he went so far as to claim in a conversation with Albert Speer, the Reich Minister for Armaments and War Production, that Fellgiebel 'had a direct line to Switzerland*. Fellgiebel had actually managed to have secret telephone and telex lines laid from his staff headquarters to the conspiracy's outposts over hundreds of kilometers without the OKW or the Gestapo finding out about it.

But there were other, even more cogent reasons for suspecting Fellgiebel.
dächt. It was his task to carry out experiments with the Enigma machine, and on his recommendation Enigma was introduced throughout the Wehrmacht. In addition, Fellgiebel and Thiele, who were close friends, advised the entire intelligence system of the OKW and the army and had a lot to do with the radio communications of the other two parts of the Wehrmacht, but also with those of the Abwehr and the SS. They supervised the entire production of secret keys and their distribution as well as the security of radio traffic and radio reconnaissance. With a few exceptions, the Abwehr was responsible for everything that lay outside their remit in the area of secret communications. Finally, both officers were members of the Black Orchestra; Fellgiebel since the assassination of Schleicher and Bredow ...
.

Like Canaris, he allegedly said at the outbreak of war that he would do everything in his power to derail Hitler's plans. Of all the conspirators, he was

perhaps in the most favorable position to sabotage these plans. He had the means to maintain radio communications with the British, and only he had access to all the Enigma keys, encryption methods and transmission times that applied in Germany. So why shouldn't he use wireless telegraphy, the science with which he was most familiar, as a weapon to destroy Hitler? In the difficult-to-understand world of telecommunications, anything was possible for the man at the top.

Whatever the British source of information regarding Enigma may have been, however successful it may ultimately have been in decoding the Wehrmacht's secret radio communications, the Turing machine was only partially usable when 'Fall Gelb' loomed. However, the British were not lacking in warnings. Apart from Müller's communications about the Vatican, Oster had also been trying throughout the fall, winter and spring of 193 9/40 to warn them that Hitler intended to overrun Belgium, Holland and France." (Anthony Cave Brown, "The Invisible Front", page 193 ff.)

The grave suspicions Brown expresses against Fellgiebel in his report are fully justified by Hitler's personal architect, Professor Hermann Giesler, who states the following in his report "Another Hitler", published in 1977:

"About a week later after the assassination attempt on July 20, 1944, Speer came to see me. As he was pressed for time, I got into his car as he drove on towards Stuttgart. We talked about the promotion of buildings important to the war effort in my area, about manpower and steel quotas. Then we talked about July 20th, its motives and its effects. Speer had been to the FHQu in the meantime and briefly reported on his impressions and the extent of the conspiracy that had now become apparent.

Speer said worriedly: "The Führer was and still is very stressed after the assassination attempt and its military and political consequences. But I think the time has come for you to report to headquarters. The Führer must take a step back from the assassination and all the disappointments. Giesler, you are the only one who could distract him, even if only for a few hours a day. Tell him about urban planning problems, Linz and the development on the banks of the Danube, that

would interest him now and get him out of his constant brooding.

After a few days, a telephone call came from the Führer's headquarters. Bormann was brief: "Please come as soon as possible, the Führer is expecting you. Bring anything of your plans that might interest him and, of course, anything relating to Linz.

Full of excitement to see Adolf Hitler and talk to him, I arrived at the Führer's headquarters in Wolf's Lair. But what he then confided in me and told me in the following weeks, what I was told on his instructions, what I read in documents and protocols and what I experienced directly, shook me to the core. I would have thought everything I learned was impossible - I found it all unreal, like a lemur's haunting. . At tea, to which he immediately invited me, he only mentioned the assassination in passing, he spoke briefly about his injuries. Linge had to show me his skirt and his torn trousers, which were slit many times along their length like lansquenet trousers.....

On the first evening we talked about urban planning issues, about Linz and Munich . . . Adolf Hitler seemed tense at first, but then became increasingly lively and open-minded in the course of our conversation.

Bormann asked me to join him the next morning. He gave me instructions: Please don't ask the Führer any questions about July 20 and anything connected with it, unless he talks about it of his own accord. Instead, do everything you can to distract him - talk to him about your plans, mainly Linz, that's what interests him most. On the other hand, I think it's right that you should be well informed about all the events of July 20th. I will make sure that you are informed about every detail and all the connections."

Hermann Giesler read the sober protocols, from which it emerged how treason and treachery, beginning in the years before the war, became rampant, especially on the fighting front, bringing death to hundreds of thousands of soldiers. Giesler read the conspirators' mendacious appeals to the German people, the plan to overthrow the Reich and the list of ministers of Goerdeler, who was to be Reich Chancellor, at the top of which the name "Speer" was mentioned as a minister, albeit with a

question mark.

Surprised, Giesler jumped up and asked Bormann: "What does that mean - that's not possible?"

Bormann looked up: "Party comrade Giesler, anything is possible in this matter!" Bormann slowly stood up and took an extensive file from his safe, opened it and showed Giesler the top sheet, on which only the name "Speer" was visible. One evening, for some reason, Hitler himself spoke about July 20th. Giesler told him that he had seen some films of the proceedings before the People's Court and was shocked. Hitler replied: "I don't want to see any of it, it's enough for me that I have to read the reports. Through the assassination, not only high treason but also the disgusting treason has lost its camouflage and has come to light for me. I had long suspected the treason, and in Vinnitsa I felt it directly - often I thought I could physically feel the insult. But now I learn far more and beyond what is made public. After sober reflection, I think it is right to remain silent - in the interests of the fighting front and for the sake of the unity of the people.

This reactionary clique has been plotting my overthrow by revolt or assassination since 1938, if not earlier. But openly confronting me with a weapon was not in their nature. How they must have hated me and National I Socialism to betray even the fighting troops without restraint and pathetically! The full extent of this shameful activity is now becoming visible-it is so disgusting! Rattenhuber and Högl will tell you some of it, but it will remain confidential. I have sworn everyone who knows anything about it to silence, and that goes for you too!"

The head of the Security Command, SS Brigadeführer Rattenhuber, and Criminal Counselor Högl then informed Giesler about the assassination attempt and the further events in the Wolf's Lair, and of course they also went into more detail about Fellgiebel: "It is strange that Fellgiebel did nothing to alert the clique in Bendlerstrasse in Berlin after the assassination attempt on the Führer had failed - so they continued to try the putsch and everything came to nothing.

'Oh,' said Rattenhuber, 'perhaps Fellgiebel tried to disguise himself by keeping a low profile, just as his deputy and successor, Mr. Thiele, did in the days that

followed. "All in all, the conspiracy from 'above' had to fail simply because they didn't reckon with the decent officers and soldiers who didn't go along with it, who stood by their oath and the oath bearer. They didn't even have a company behind them, and not one of the whole clique had the courage to draw a pistol against the Führer. At first we only knew that Fellgiebel belonged to the closest circle of the conspirators and had spoken out in favor of the
had advocated the elimination of the Führer as a precondition for the success of the Valkyrie Putsch. He was arrested by us.

But then something strange happened: a sergeant from the intelligence unit at the Führer's headquarters came and reported an unusual double circuit, parallel or bridge circuit - messages, reports or the transmission of orders, operational directives and tactical details. 'Only officer telephone calls' could be overheard by activating this circuit in the third position!

The sergeant was a specialist and knew a thing or two about technical communications; he had become aware of it, but he only became openly suspicious after Fellgiebel's arrest.

It now turned out that there was a direct connection from the Führer headquarters' intelligence center to Switzerland through some kind of coupling; the messages and orders could be overheard there through a switching connection that was most likely in or near Berlin.

'The treason reports went to Switzerland by wire,' Hög I l added, 'and not by radio, that is now absolutely certain. We believe that the Swiss secret service was at the other end of the line, and some of them must have been in contact with the Soviet espionage groups - and they then transmitted encrypted messages to the enemy. That's how it was done for years."

We knew all along about the Soviet radio centers in "neutral Switzerland", which were fed by the various espionage groups. They were located by direction finding. They could only exist there with the knowledge and connivance of a group of Swiss secret service officials who were consciously or unconsciously putting themselves at the service of the Bolsheviks. Schellenberg had already tried in

negotiations to stop the espionage business in Switzerland . . .

Well, and now we start with case number 2. Fellgiebel was initially only arrested as a participant in the conspiracy and as an accomplice to the assassination attempt. We still had no news of the technical details of the long-standing suspicion of treason on the fighting front. At the suggestion of Field Marshal Keitel, General Thiele, Fellgiebel's former deputy, now became his successor. As the new head of the intelligence service entrusted to him, he reports to the Führer, swearing an oath of allegiance.

In the meantime, this happens with the report from the sergeant of the intelligence unit. The surveillance begins in secrecy, and it is not long before it is clear that General Thiele is playing in this macabre orchestra.

He knows about the secret circuit - the technicians call it a parallel circuit. Because one person pulls the other in, his membership of the conspiratorial clique is revealed at the same time. And now things continue to tumble in the intelligence system: The chief of staff at Fellgiebel, a Colonel Hahn, and the head of the intelligence group at the commander of the replacement army, a Colonel Hassel. They were all arrested. At Thiele's, Högl and I take care of it with all the courtesy and respect to which a general is entitled. . .

So, Professor, now you're wondering why the Führer is so disgusted by this and why he didn't tell you about it himself - this betrayal of the fighting front affected him more than the assassination. The other day he told us that he had long expected that he would be shot at by this reactionary clique, but he would not have believed any officer capable of such underhandedness, especially not the common betrayal of soldiers who risk their lives for Germany every day." (Hermann Giesler, "Another Hitler", page 430 ff.)

With the discovery of the secret parallel circuit in the Führer's headquarters by the sergeant of the intelligence unit, the great mystery surrounding the mysterious intelligence source of the Soviet chief spy in Switzerland, Rudolf Rössler, known as Lucy, which has occupied contemporary historians for over 30 years, can now be considered solved.

The French journalists Pierre Accoce and Pierre Quet were right in their publication "La guerre a ete gagnee en Suisse", in that they named the German informants by their initials, all of whom were part of the German conspiracy of July 20th. The conspirator Fritz Thiele, the representative of General Fellgiebel of the intelligence troops, was correctly identified as "Fritz T.".

In his 1967 documentary "Der 20. Juli und der Landesverrat" ("July 20th and Treason"), the author pointed out with a number of serious indications that the sources of the Soviet agent Rössler could only have been members of the conspiracy.

The fact that the Anglo-Americans were able to land in North Africa on November 8, 1942 without hindrance owed far more to Canaris' deception of the German war effort than to their "Ultra" procedure. While the Commander-in-Chief South, Field Marshal Albert Kesselring, expected the Allies to land somewhere in the Mediterranean, Canaris made the most contradictory predictions: From a particularly well-informed source, he first wanted to know about a landing of the "Torch" company on the West African coast, only to then assume a landing in Corsica, followed by southern France and finally the Balkans. On the basis of his reports, the Führer's headquarters came to the certain assumption that the Allies had landed in southern France.

General Erich Fellgiebel, Chief of Intelligence of the German Wehrmacht, who had secret telephone lines laid as far as Switzerland in order to make treasonous acts of conspiracy in favor of the enemy powers possible. He was certainly one of the most serious conspirators.

General Henning von Tresckow, leading conspirator in the central section of the Eastern Front. Below: Tresckow at the map table during a briefing with the staff of Army Group Center. (Tresckow leaning with both hands.) To his left, also leaning, is his co-conspirator Colonel Schulze-Büttger, with von Schlabrendorff on the far right. In the command of one of the most decisive sections of the Eastern Front were fanatical conspirators who wanted to prevent a "German success" at all costs.

Kesselring concluded from certain facts that a landing would only be possible in North Africa.

Canaris aroused considerable displeasure with Hitler through his false reports, which intensified when the German leadership was completely surprised by the fall of Mussolini on July 25. Although Canaris was well informed about the situation by General Roatta, the head of the Italian defense service, whom he knew, and his successor, General Arne, with whom he was friends, and knew that a change in the regime there was imminent, he reported nothing tangible. The Ic officers of the German command staff who reported that Italy was about to fall away were not believed because the news did not come from Canaris, whose relationship of trust with Ame was known to the OKW.

Karl Bartz wrote: "It is quite impossible that General Ame did not know what was going on in the Italian Wehrmacht until April 1943. It is also impossible that he should not have known that Italy would go over to the Allies. His predecessor Roatta actively participated in the preparatory talks for the defection. Canaris had been in Venice for lengthy talks with Ame in the spring. At that time, he must have been aware of both the planned upheaval and Italy's imminent secession. Even the German defense office in Rome reported immediately after the revolution that the Germans should not put too much faith in Badoglio's assurances. In the foreseeable future, Italy would stop fighting the Allies and turn over to them." (Karl Bartz, "Die Tragödie der deutschen Abwehr", page 183 f.)

After the fall of Mussolini, Marshal Badoglio took over the Italian leadership and began negotiations with Eisenhower on Italy's surrender, but at the same time assured him that he would continue to fight alongside Germany until the victorious end of the war. Hitler, however, did not believe Badoglio's assurances on the basis of reports received from military intelligence and considered preventive military measures. Italian intelligence had learned that the transfer of three German divisions to Italy was planned in the event of Italian betrayal, in order to occupy northern Italy, the Italian naval bases and Rome immediately.

According to Brown's report, page 287, which is based on Heydrich's deputy and later successor Schellenberg, Canaris covered up the reports he had received, which also contained warnings, by reporting to his superior, Field Marshal Keitel, in a reassuringly misleading form. As a result, at Keitel's suggestion, he was sent to his friend General Ame in Venice to find out from him what was really to be thought of Italy's loyalty to the Alliance.

Canaris met his friend Ame, who had also come with some of his staff, at the Danieli Hotel in Venice on July 29, 1943. The two friends first met in private, during which Ame was able to tell his friend Canaris openly about the Italian armistice negotiations with the Allies and explain to him the Badoglio government's concerns about a planned counter-attack by Hitler. Ame implored Canaris to do everything possible to ensure that Italy's withdrawal from the war would not be prematurely disrupted by Hitler's military measures. Canaris promised the requested help and kept his word. Following the confidential meeting, of which Canaris later informed only his most trusted colleagues, an official conference was held in which the admiral put the questions to Ame that Keitel had instructed him to ask. Ame played the indignant man and stated that there was no truth in the suspicions against Badoglio's government and that it was determined to continue the fight alongside its German ally to the end. The conference turned into an almost enthusiastic rally by Ame for the Axis.

The minutes, drafted by one of Canaris' employees, were presented to Hitler. According to Walter Hagen, who worked in the German foreign intelligence service during the war, "Hitler was hardly completely convinced, but was nonetheless made to waver in his intention to intervene preventively, and so Ame's deception was undeniably a success; it was perhaps decisive in ensuring that Germany did not anticipate the planned move." (Walter Hagen, "The Secret Front", page 451 f.)

The deceptive maneuver of the two secret service chiefs was certainly a success for Ame, but for Canaris it meant the most serious sabotage of his own country's war effort. Hitler did not occupy Italy, as initially planned, and did not attempt to arrest Badoglio, who was able to negotiate Italy's surrender with the Allies without being prevented from doing so by the German Wehrmacht. The surrender document was signed in secret on September 3, 1943, while the agreements came into force on September 8. When the Italian fleet sailed to surrender to the Allies, it was attacked by German aircraft. Of the six modern battleships that Italy still had at its disposal, the flagship "Roma" was hit so hard that it sank; a second was badly damaged. "On the morning of September 11, the British Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham, was able to send the following radio message to the Lords of the Admiralty: 'I am pleased to inform your Lordships that the Italian battle fleet is now at anchor under the guns of the fortress of Malta.

anchored under the guns of the fortress of Malta." (Anthony Cave Brown, "The Invisible Front", page 288.)

Höhne writes about Canaris' meeting with Ame in Venice during their confidential conversation: "Suddenly Canaris said: 'The most heartfelt congratulations1. The Italian pretended not to understand, but Canaris spoke faster: 'Congratulations for your July 25th. We need one too. Germany is only dreaming of freeing itself from Hitler. .. "Admiral, I am counting on your absolute loyalty. We are only trying to gain time today. The armistice (with the Allies) will be requested within a short time. However, it is necessary that Italy not be paralyzed by an immediate and harsh Nazi occupation.' Canaris replied: 'To achieve this, there is only one means: prevent the Wehrmacht from reinforcing its troops in Italy in any way possible. In a word: try to allow as few German soldiers as possible to enter Italy'.... 'As far as I am concerned, dear General Ame, you can rest assured. I will say nothing in Berlin. On the contrary, I will emphatically emphasize that Italy wants to continue the fight side by side with us. He was silent for a moment, then he implored Ame: 'It is impossible for you to hold out for more than a month. You have no choice but to withdraw from the fray. But listen to me, let as few German soldiers come over the Brenner as possible.

On July 31, Canaris flew back with his companions, convinced that Italy would withdraw from the war in a few weeks at the latest. Apparently he hoped that Italy's capitulation would shock the German leadership to such an extent that influential military officers and moderate party functionaries in the Reich (as in Italy before Mussolini's fall) were prepared to neutralize Hitler and offer the Allies an armistice. Mussolini's opaque police chief Carmine Senise, a kind of Italian Himmler, had played a decisive role in the overthrow - why shouldn't the example be repeated in Germany? These were certainly illusions, but only political pipe dreams of this kind kept Canaris in office. In any case, he was determined to use his reporting to prevent strong German units from reaching Italy in time to respond to the withdrawal of the Axis partner with an abrupt occupation of the country.

After his return from Venice, he told every official interlocutor that Italy would undoubtedly remain on Germany's side. At a dinner in Canaris' bunker in Zossen, Huppenkothen was also told that he, the admiral, "personally and according to the impression he had received from Ame, considered it impossible that Italy would do anything independently to end the war." (Heinz Höhne, "Canaris - Patriot in the Twilight", page 506 ff.)

The pinnacle of hypocrisy was displayed by the Italian intelligence chief Roatta to the German Commander-in-Chief South, Field Marshal Kesselring. When the latter, in his ignorance, asked Roatta what was really going on, the Italian replied blatantly that all reports of the surrender were a hoax. It was not until late in the evening that he called Kesselring to explain that the news was true and had taken him by surprise.

On January 12 and 17, 1944, the enemy advanced with far superior forces against the Garigliano section of the Italian southern front and achieved strong breakthroughs, putting the German 10th Army at great risk. At Kesselring's headquarters, Canaris, who had arrived in Italy shortly before, was shown the reports indicating an Allied landing at Civitavecchia.

The chief of Kesselring's staff, Major General Siegfried Westphal, recalls, as Brown reports, "that Canaris was pressed to tell everything he knew about the enemy's intentions regarding a landing, especially concerning the positions of enemy aircraft carriers, battleships and landing craft. Canaris could not give any details, but believed that no new landings were to be expected in the near future. . . A few hours after Canaris' departure, the enemy landed at Anzio." (Anthony Cave Brown, "The Invisible Front", page 396.)

Kesselring, however, had marched his reserves of two divisions and parts of the "Hermann Göring" division to the hard-pressed front at Garigliano on the basis of the false information given by Canaris, leaving the coast at Anzio open to the Allies to land and form a bridgehead without defense. If the leader of the Anglo-American landing operation, General Lucas, had seized the opportunity, it would have been easy for him to capture Rome, as the city was also denuded of German forces. Kesselring only succeeded in mastering his precarious situation

by quickly pulling together various units from all directions and, moreover, delivering a four-week battle of attrition to the Allies, which was very costly for the enemy and would have led to the destruction of the bridgehead if it had been possible to supply reserves.

Jan Colvin asked a senior British naval officer, Cap. J. Hillgarth, who was well acquainted with Spain, what he knew about Canaris' reports from the peninsula. "I do not think they ever did us any particular harm," was his reply. My friend H. C. O 'Neill Strategi- cus remembers seeing some reports from Canaris after Wavell's victories over Graziani in the desert. He greatly overestimated the number of Wavell's
troops, Strategicus told me. Canaris should have known exactly how many or how few divisions we really had in the Middle East at the time. Now that you tell me that Canaris was working against Hitler, I can find an explanation for much that I had often racked my brains over." (Jan Colvin, "Admiral Canaris - Chief of Intelligence", page 202.)

That the British intended to kidnap Canaris is clear from the following report by Brown: "In the German High Command, the impression that Canaris was unreliable grew stronger. They did not yet suspect that he was working against Hitler, but the Allies did. The clearest sign that people in London sympathized with Canaris came during the Torch* phase of the operation. Canaris had arrived in Algeciras, a Spanish town in the immediate vicinity of Gibraltar, where the Abwehr had one of its most important branches. The MI-6 office in Gibraltar learned of the admiral's whereabouts, and with the approval of the governor of Gibraltar, General Mason-MacFarlan - the former British military attaché in Berlin whose proposals for an assassination attempt against Hitler in 1938 had been rejected by the British Foreign Office - the plan was made to kidnap Canaris and bring him to London by plane. The London journalist Jan Colvin, who was the first to ask which side Canaris was really on, writes about this: "Gibraltar received a radio message from London canceling the operation." Colvin's source told him that the radio message did not say: 'Leave our man in peace', but: "(Canaris) is much more valuable where he is at the moment." (Anthony Cave Brown, "The Invisible Front", page 224.)

As stupid as the abduction of Canaris would have been for Britain, it would have been welcome for the German war effort. He would have been assured of excellent treatment in British captivity. Heinz Höhne also incriminates Canaris with the following treasonous conspiracy. At the end of 1942, Canaris sent a message to the British intelligence chief Stewart Menzies through intermediaries in Spain, inviting him to a meeting at a neutral location. Menzies was ready; the landing of the Western Allies in North Africa seemed to him a suitable opportunity "to see the German chief of defense somewhere in Spain or Portugal". Menzies submitted his plan to his superiors at the Foreign Office, but they refused to give their approval because Stalin had to be taken into consideration. The Foreign Office, as the supervisory authority of the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), distrusted Menzies and instructed its diplomatic missions abroad to "automatically reject peace probes by military or civilian persons of the German resistance".

When the American Allen W. Dulles came to Berne to set up the European headquarters of the Office of Strategy Services (OSS), the secret service of the United States, he was warned by the British SlS representative: "Beware of provocateurs from German secret services posing as so-called resistance fighters."

In January 1943, Roosevelt and Churchill agreed "not to make pacts with any German resisters, but only to bring about the 'unconditional surrender of Germany'".

Despite this Allied stipulation, Canaris now sought contact with the Americans, as the meeting with Menzies did not materialize. This contact was made possible by Captain Paul Leverkuehn, head of the KO branch in Istanbul, who had worked as a lawyer in Washington after the First World War on a committee for the settlement of private war damage claims and there met the lawyer William J. Donovan, who was now at the head of the US Secret Service. The Americans in Istanbul knew about Leverkuehn's US connections and had passed an employee of the American War Information Service on to Leverkuehn. Through this connection, the captain learned of the existence of the American intelligence officer Frigate Captain and Navy Attache George H. Earle, who was a friend of Roosevelt and had been stationed in Turkey as his Balkan observer since the beginning of 1943. To initiate contact, Leverkuehn put forward the ex-diplomat Kurt Freiherr von Lernsner, who had once served as Legation Counselor at the German Embassy in Washington and had won the friendship of Roosevelt, then Secretary of State for the Navy.

As both Roosevelt friends got on well, Earle had no reservations about receiving Lernsner's friend Canaris. "As late as the end of January 1943," Höhne recalls, "the admiral sat opposite the Roosevelt president and asked him whether he saw any possibility of Hitler's German opponents reaching an agreement with the Western powers in order to shorten the war and unite all forces against the Soviet threat. According to Canaris' argumentation, there was only one terrible alternative: the formula of unconditional surrender, which would enable Hitler to demand the most fanatical war effort in German history and thus prolong the war indefinitely. As this was also not in the interests of the Western Allies, he, Canaris, offered a solution on behalf of the forces behind him: Armistice to the west, continuation of the fight in the east.

Earle expressed his sympathy and promised to inform the President of the proposal. In the meantime, Canaris left it to Baron von Lernsner to interest Earle in his plan with further hints. Our friend Franklin Roosevelt let me know that he would immediately

he would immediately discuss any offer from me with his allies in the friendliest possible way, as he believed me at my word," Lernsner later wrote. I wanted to fly to him from Stambul with a great American (Earle). The Pope, the Cardinal Secretary of State Maglione, Nuncio Roncalli, Bishop Montini had promised every support.1

Then came Roosevelt's response to Canaris' proposal: the President refused. Canaris tried again and asked Earle for another meeting. The American refused - the order from Washington did not allow him to negotiate with Canaris any longer. Canaris was disappointed, but not yet discouraged. He again urged Lernsner not to break off contact with the American under any circumstances.

In May 1943, the baron presented Earle with a new plan that was even more adventurous than Canaris' proposal. German army officers, Lernsner revealed to the American military attaché, had worked out a plan to occupy the Führer's headquarters in a raid with the help of an intervention group that was being formed in the area of Army Group Center in Russia, to arrest Hitler and finally hand him over to the Western Allies. What was meant was the "Reiterabteilung Boeselager", a cavalry regiment of around 3,000 men under the command of Rittmeister Georg Freiherr von Boeselager, which anti-Nazi conspirators saw as a kind of disposal force in the event of a coup d'état.

In June, Canaris had Count Moltke travel to Istanbul, where he made a proposal to two professors he knew with connections to the OSS, which read like a continuation of the Canaris plan. Moltke suggested bringing a German general staff officer to England who had the necessary knowledge "to arrange the opening of the German Western Front with the Western Allies", as one historian put it; the Eastern Front, on the other hand, was to remain intact. Moltke demanded - again like Canaris in January - that the Casablanca formula be withdrawn, but both professors considered this to be utopian.

Nevertheless, the American interlocutors were so interested that OSS chief Donovan intervened personally. He had his old friend Leverkuehn send him a signed declaration typed on the official paper of the German embassy in Ankara, in which Canaris' representative undertook on behalf of the inner-German opposition to urge the German commanders to remain passive in the event of an invasion of France by the Western Allies. This seemed so important to Donovan that he decided to make another approach to Roosevelt ... . In the summer of 1943, the Abwehr chief had finally achieved his first goal: Generals Menzies and Donovan signaled to their German counterparts that they were ready for a meeting in Spain. Shortly afterwards, the secret chiefs met in SanItander...

Canaris presented his peace plan to Menzies and Donovan, which still contained the old scheme: Armistice in the West, elimination or extradition of Hitler, continuation of the war in the East. The Briton raised hardly any objections, even the rougher Donovan bowed to the logic of the German Admiral. .

But the pact between the spy chiefs did not last long. President Roosevelt called the high-handed OSS chief to order and the head of the Secret Intelligence Service

also had trouble playing down his forbidden trip to Spain in front of the Foreign Office. Roosevelt forbade any further secret dealings with German negotiators. Donovan and Menzies would hardly have thought any differently than the American Secretary of the Navy, James Forrestal, who one day met Earle, who had traveled to the White House for a new Canaris offer. Forrestal: 'My God, George, you and I and Bill Bullit are the only ones around the president who know what the Russians actually want.'" (Heinz Höhne, "Canaris - Patriot in the Twilight", page 460ff.)

The above report shows unmistakably that neither the British nor the American government had the slightest confidence in the German conspiracy, nor did they think of refraining from unconditional surrender. When Canaris heard in Berlin about the Allies' demand for unconditional surrender, he told the head of Abwehr Division II, Colonel Erwin Lahousen: "You know, my dear Lahousen, historians will not have to rack their brains about who started the war after this one, as they did after the last one. But it is a different matter when we ask who is to blame for prolonging the war. I believe that the other side has now knocked the last weapon out of our hands with which we could end it. Unconditional surrender - no, our generals won't swallow that. I no longer see a solution."

For the other conspirators, the proclamation was like a blow from a club: they believed it sealed their fate. Field Marshal von Witzleben declared: "Now no honorable man can lead the German people into such a situation (as surrender)." (Anthony Cave Brown, "The Invisible Front", page 235.)

On March 25, 1944, the commanders-in-chief of the American armed forces submitted a memorandum to President Roosevelt in which they presented their view "that the formula of unconditional surrender should be changed as early as possible in order to create favorable conditions for 'Overlord' (invasion of Normandy, author's note)"..... But the President refused. His reply, dated April 1, 1944, sounds like revenge, moral indignation and cynicism about the intentions and capabilities of the Black Orchestra:

"The only problem is that the memorandum assumes in its arguments that a restored German state would immediately take an active interest in peace in Europe. From long personal experience inside and outside Germany, however, I believe that the German mentality cannot be changed by a decree, a law or a military order. Rather, it must change from within, and that can take two generations. Any other assumption would necessarily mean accepting that a period of calm would be followed by a third world war.

So it seems to me easiest to stick to what I have already said, namely a) that the United Nations are determined to inflict a total defeat on the whole of Germany, but that b) the Allies have no intention of annihilating the German people. Please note, however, that I am not willing at the moment to say that we have no intention of destroying the German nation. For as long as the word 'Reich' exists in Germany as an expression of national unity, it will be associated with the present form. Therefore we must try to eradicate the word 'Reich' and all that it stands for."

(Anthony Cave Brown, "The Invisible Front", page 554.)

The fact that Roosevelt actually had the biological destruction of the German people in mind was revealed by the well-known Morgenthau Plan of his friend and finance minister, which had already led to the dismantling of German industrial plants. The German people cannot feed themselves from their own soil. It must therefore manufacture and export industrial products in order to be able to import food.

However, the American president was not yet allowed to announce any plans for extermination in the spring of 1944, as this would have opened the eyes of the German people and, in particular, the German conspirators too wide.

On the southern front in Africa, the sabotage of the German war effort was mainly carried out by bribed Italian admirals, but an officer of Admiral Canaris' German counterintelligence unit and other members of the conspiracy also took part. After the war, the Italian aviation officer Antonio Trizzino published the book "Navi e poltrone" in Italy in 1952 and a second "Settembre nero" in 1956, which appeared in Germany in 1957 under the title "Die verratene Flotte". In this publication, Trizzino deals in detail with the sabotage of supplies for Rommel's Afrika Korps and writes:

"No sooner had the steamers left the harbors than they were torpedoed. The enemy's warships and submarines as well as their aircraft were
enemy's warships and submarines as well as their airplanes were so conspicuously fast at our convoys that it could no longer be a coincidence. Occasionally a convoy remained unharmed, but only when it took a course contrary to orders. Wasn't that revealing enough? The tankers were particularly threatened. When Rommel prepared his attack on El Alamein at the end of August 1942, he was counting on the 12,000 liters of petrol from the tanker 'Pozza Ricca'. But shortly before the day of arrival, the tanker was torpedoed, and it was possible to load some of the petrol onto another tanker, which left in great haste. But it too met the same fate, so that Rommel was forced to break off his attack after 24 hours because the fuel supply failed."

According to Paul Carell's report in "The Desert Foxes", page 73, both Rommel's supplies and his operations in the African campaign were sabotaged by treachery. His attack plan against Tobruk in November 1941 was betrayed so early that his British opponent, General Sir Claude Auchinleck, was able to beat him to the punch with a successful counter-offensive.

"Of course, British intelligence," says Carell, "had learned of the Germans' offensive preparations through radio, aerial reconnaissance and agent reports . . . But the news that reached the British High Command in Cairo was meagre. Arab girls did bring the British some information. Arab camel drivers in British service reported on German-Italian troop gatherings. But that was not much. England's spies were not only active in Africa. They were also over on the mainland, in Sicily and above all in Rome. Here the British secret service had tapped into a few good sources. According to credible Italian publications, the Italian Admiral Maugeri was

in British service and informed the British about the supply transports departing from Italian ports for Rommel. Who is surprised that up to 75 percent were sunk! The extent of the betrayal remains a mystery to this day, but this much is certain: England's agents were provided with priceless information that led to decisive German failures in Africa.

But the Italian Admiral Maugeri cannot have been the only British source of information about the African theater of war. Important information also reached British-American espionage from high German offices in Berlin via Rome. A chapter of war history still lies dormant here that is as opaque as it is delicate; for the military intelligence was in part coupled with political resistance to Hitler; and this political struggle against German and Italian fascism often intersected under the subtle influence of the British.
the sophisticated influence of the British-American intelligence service with military treachery, without the informant always seeing through it."

When Paul Carell wrote his war book "The Desert Foxes" in 1952, he could rightly say that a chapter of war history still lay dormant here, and since then no less than 26 years had to pass before this dark chapter became quite transparent with the publication of Hitler's architect Hermann Giesler's "Another Hitler". The "parallel plot" of the conspirator Fellgiebel in the Führer's headquarters brought it to light.

We have known since 1963 that an officer of the German Abwehr was also involved in the sabotage of supplies for Rommel, when Erich Kern reported in his documentary "Betrayal of Germany" on Dr. Hans Kemritz, who joined the German Abwehr at the outbreak of the war in 1939 as a captain in the reserve and was also active in the Abwehr in Brussels and Paris during the war. Following Erich Kern's report, Ferdinand Friedensburg, a member of the Bundestag, wrote in the "Revue" of May 17, 1952:

"It has now been proven that during the war Kemritz gave reports to the Allies via a secret transmitter about supplies for General Field Marshal Rommel's Africa Corps. This is also the key to answering the question of why the American secret service covered up the traitor and manhunter after 1945, evaded German prosecution and brought him to safety. Revue' possesses documentary evidence that Dr. Hans Kemritz committed treason before 1945, and hereby presents it to the public in facsimile. The original of this affidavit is sealed in the safe of a prominent Berlin lawyer and notary; it was given by a man who was able to speak to a number of Kemritz victims in a cell of the Berlin-Weißensee GPU prison. This former GPU prisoner, who is now free again, was able to speak to the counterintelligence officer in the GPU cellar who was put on the trail of the traitor Kemritz during the war, at a time when the enormously high sinking figures of the Afrikanachschubes suggested the suspicion of treason from within the ranks. These investigations put Captain Wernicke on the trail of a spy ring whose headquarters in Paris, Avenue du Jena, in the immediate vicinity of the Arc de Triomphe, used a secret transmitter to radio data, locations and tonnage of the Afrikanachschubes to the other side." (Erich Kern, "Betrayal of Germany", page 152 ff.)

The Battle of Medenine at the beginning of March 1943 was also decided by treachery. "Montgomery set up more than 40 batteries right in front of Rommel's Rommel's attack front. The first aim of the German attack had been to cut off the strong enemy artillery group from the flank and rear. Now, however, the German attack met the enemy artillery head-on. And, as it turned out later, it had been ready to defend itself for two days. There was no doubt: Montgomery had been informed of Rommel's intentions to attack and had regrouped his artillery in good time. Treachery was involved here. And the proof of treachery was soon found in the pocket of a captured French non-commissioned officer who had a paper with him containing precise details of the start of the offensive and Rommel's planned direction of attack. The note gave the date of the attack as March 4, the original date. The two days by which the attack had been postponed had given the British commander-in-chief time to make all the necessary preparations. Since Rommel's entire attack was geared towards surprise, but there was no longer any question of surprise, the battle was lost before it had even begun. ..

Just how precisely the traitor had worked was also shown by the behavior of the British units against the frontal attack of the 90th Light Division. It had been deployed to the south for deception purposes and was intended to tie down British forces. Montgomery, however, withdrew his units from the front of the 90th Light Division, so that the German thrust came to nothing. The British commander-in-chief obviously had not the slightest concern that a serious attack might be imminent on this part of the front. Who was the traitor? After the war, many people suspected that the betrayal had come from a high Italian command staff.

On the afternoon of March 6, around 4 p.m., it was clear to Rommel and his commanders that there was nothing more to be gained on the battlefield of Medenine-Metameur. General Cramer suggested breaking off the attack. Rommel agreed. This was the end of the last major attack by the German-Italian tank army." (Paul Carell, "The Desert Foxes", page 405 f.)

Sabotaging the conspiracy on the invasion front

On October 15, 1943, General von Unruh ("Heldenklau"), who had also been searching France for possible reserves for the front, appeared excitedly at the Führer's headquarters and demanded to be allowed to see Hitler immediately. Unruh explained that France was defenceless against an enemy invasion.
France was defenceless against an enemy invasion because Rundstedt, the Commander-in-Chief West, had failed to "take precautions for an active defense". Hitler responded to the general's report by appointing Rommel as commander-in-chief of Army Group B in northern France in January 1944 with the task of creating

the conditions for a successful defense against the long-awaited Anglo-American invasion of France. (David Irving, "Hilter and his commanders", page 530.)

Hitler could rely on the fact that Rommel, with his tough assertiveness, would bring together all available and accessible forces and resources for a strong defensive Atlantic wall that would enable him to destroy the enemy as soon as he landed on the coast. Like his supreme warlord, he was aware that the outcome of the forthcoming defensive battle could mean the decisive turning point in the entire course of the war. According to a servant, Hitler's mood was confident and high spirits. "The news couldn't be better!" he said to Keitel that morning (the first day of the invasion, the author) instead of greeting him. "As long as they were in England, we couldn't catch them. Now we finally have them where we can beat them." (David Irving, "Hitler and His Generals", page 589.)

At that hour, Hitler could not have known that he had fallen victim to the spirit of Zossen, whom he had rightly suspected of treachery for years, just as Rommel perhaps could not have suspected in January 1944 that he would become entangled a few months later in the clutches of that spirit of betrayal and sabotage of his own warfare.

Immediately after the end of the victorious Western campaign, when the conspiracy was further away than ever from its goal of ending the war by eliminating Hitler, key representatives of the conspiracy met in Paris to plan the coup. "But incredible as it may sound," writes Brown, "the moment Hitler's invincibility seemed proven, a new phase of the conspiracy against him began to take shape in an apartment at the Hotel Meurice in Paris. Several members of the conspiracy had gathered here, allegedly to prepare the Führer's triumphal entry into the French capital. They included General Karl-Heinrich von Stülpnagel, Colonel Eduard Wagner, Lieutenant General Erich Fellgiebel, Lieutenant Colonel Henning von Tresckow and Claus Graf von Stauffenberg. At the end of the meeting, the conspirators left Stülpnagel's room. They were aware that Hitler's victories had for the moment dashed all hopes of a successful revolt. Now it was a matter of preparing the coup d'état with a general staff." (Anthony Cave Brown, "The Invisible Front", page 197.)

When Rommel took over the supreme command in Normandy, the conspiracy in Paris under General von Stülpnagel, who had meanwhile been appointed military commander in France, had already taken on a firm form and had joined the Berlin front with the group of conspirators around Henning von Tresckow, who had become 1st General Staff Officer of Army Group Center in Russia under Field Marshal von Kluge. The difference of opinion among the conspirators as to whether the overthrow should take place through an assassination attempt against Hitler or through sudden mass arrests was quickly resolved when Count Claus von Stauffenberg decided - in the spring of 1944 - to carry out the assassination attempt on Hitler. The opportunity arose as he had meanwhile been able to take over the post of Chief of Staff to the Commander of the Reserve Army under Colonel General Fromm and as such had access to Hitler's briefings at the Führer's headquarters. In

his position as chief of staff under Fromm, who gave him complete freedom to make his own decisions, Stauffenberg had many opportunities to transfer senior officers to the staffs of the front units in the interests of the conspiracy.

It was therefore not difficult to smuggle the co-conspirator, First Lieutenant of the Reserve Count Fritz von der Schulenburg, into the commission of General Unruh, who knew how to keep reservists suitable for the front where they could be useful to the resistance. He is said to have gained supporters of the resistance above all in the staffs of the military commander of France and the Commander-in-Chief West, Field Marshal von Rundstedt.

The staff of General von Stülpnagel also included Count von Stauffenberg's cousin, Lieutenant Colonel Caesar von Hofacker, whose military service at the time apparently consisted of being in close contact with the Beck-S I tauffenberg group in Berlin and providing the most secret communications. Hofacker, in turn, was on friendly terms with Dr. Gotthard von Falkenhausen, a member of the German embassy in Paris, a nephew of the Wehrmacht commander in Belgium, General of the Infantry von Falkenhausen, who was also a member of the conspiracy and maintained contact with von Stülpnagel.

Just as there was initially disagreement about the nature of the coup, there was also disagreement about the foreign policy approach. While Berlin had considered smuggling the former German ambassador in Moscow, Count Werner von der Schulenburg, through Field Marshal von Kluge's front section in the East so that he could negotiate with Stalin, Paris was only considering a solution with the Western Allies, a concept that Berlin then also followed.

In pursuit of this Western concept, an armistice on the Western Front with the surrender of all occupied territories and the continuation of the fight against Bolshevik Russia, Berlin
Stülpnagel sent a negotiator to Madrid and Lisbon in February/March 1943 to find out through intermediaries whether the Western Allies were prepared to accept this conspiracy proposal.

This treasonous task was carried out by Dr. Hans Buwert, who had been appointed provisional head of the Hachette Group, the largest French publishing house, by the Foreign Office in April 1941. Buwert had become acquainted with Hofacker through the Berlin police chief Graf Helldorf, who put him in touch with Stülpnagel at the end of 1942.

Dr. Buwert reported on the outcome of his secret mission in Spain and Portugal: "It is known that the contact with the Allies was negative. The fact of the contact remained secret for a long time, and was later even denied by the Allies; only the Russians - I believe in 1948 - reported on these negotiations and their acceptance by the Allies. Churchill is said to have accepted the German offer - an armistice in the West, withdrawal of German troops to the western border of 1939, a free hand for Germany in the continuation of the war against Russia - quite favorably; Roosevelt, on the other hand, rejected it categorically; for him, even then, there was only unconditional submission.

In November 1943, at Stülpnagel's instigation, I made contact with the French Resistance. The aim of the negotiations was to persuade the combat units of the French Resistance to adopt a conciliatory attitude towards the new German government in the event of the fall of Hitler's regime and, if necessary, to achieve a certain degree of cooperation with the French Resistance in the context of the political and military developments following the coup d'état. The formation of a new German diplomatic mission was planned for Vichy, to be headed by Caesar von Hofacker . . . A French colonel from London was even called in for these negotiations. The outcome of these negotiations was extremely satisfactory. The partners, of whom of course I only knew the noms de guerre, were later found again by chance, provided they did not perish, and confirmed the negotiations conducted with me in Paris at the time." (Wilhelm von Schramm, "Der 20. Juli in Paris", page 23f.)

The fact that conspirators did not shy away from sitting down at a table with the Resistance, whose snipers shot our soldiers from ambush, must be described as particularly macabre.

Buwert's remark in his report, according to which Churchill "quite accepted" the Brown aptly comments on Buwert's remark in his report that Churchill was "quite sympathetic" to the conspiracy's suggestion, writing: "Whether the British received these suggestions with feigned interest or with indifference, they made sure that the link was not broken. The conspirators, who were prepared to reveal the secrets of the Third Reich to prove their sincerity, were good and useful sources of intelligence (useful idiots we would say today, the author); they could also be supplied with false news about the Allies' intentions and thus cause confusion. Furthermore, if the British leaked information about the conspirators' activities, they could worry the German High Command. In Britain, the Black Orchestra was not seen as an instrument for ending the war through negotiations, but as a weapon for undermining the Third Reich from within.

Thus, in the first months of the war, everything was in place to deliberately and cynically manipulate these sincere and desperate men. In the end, this policy was bound to lead to a massacre among the conspirators. They risked not only the revenge of the Gestapo, but also betrayal by those whose help they sought. The massacre came when the Black Orchestra made a futile attempt to assassinate Hitler on July 20, 1944." (Anthony Cave Brown, "The Invisible Front", page 199.)

In the spring of 1944, the resistance in Paris was given new impetus by Lieutenant General Dr. Hans Speidel, who, coming from the east, became chief of staff of the army group led by Rommel on the invasion front. His first priority was to convince his commander-in-chief Rommel to join the resistance. "The subject of the first meetings with the Field Marshal," reports Speidel in his publication "Invasion 1944", page 81 ff., "included the thoughts of the former Mayor of Leipzig, Dr. Goerdeler, which had been conveyed to the Chief of the General Staff by Mayor Dr. Strölin for Rommel on April 14 in Freudenstadt. At the end of 1943, Goerdeler had asked Strölin to contact Field Marshal Rommel. The aim was to

convince him that Hitler and his regime had to be eliminated in order to save Germany and Europe. The mayor of Stuttgart, whom the field marshal had long held in high esteem as an energetic and insightful man, had referred to his first meeting with Rommel in February 1944. It had discussed the legal possibilities for changing the regime and ending the war.

Information from the military side, including from Colonel General (ret.) Beck and the Quartermaster General, General der Ar- tillerie Wagner, supplemented the discussion.
tillerie Wagner, completed the picture. The judgments agreed that ways and means of ending the war should be found without delay, before the inevitable catastrophe cut off any possibility of negotiation. . . A series of important discussions followed . . .

After preparatory meetings with the chief (Speidel, the author), Rommel and Stülpnagel held an in-depth discussion on May 15, 1944 in a country house in Mareil-Marly near St. Germain about the measures necessary to end the war in the West and to overthrow the National Socialist regime. After an overview of the political and military situation, the theoretical and practical preparations were defined in detail.

Both military commanders repeatedly voiced their political and military concerns to Commander-in-Chief West von Rundstedt and were listened to. The General Quartermaster of the Army, General of Artillery Eduard Wagner, came to the command post of the Army Group in May to coordinate the necessary measures in the west with the preparations of the Army High Command. He informed Rommel about the active resistance forces in the Army High Command, the 'calendar1 preparations for an uprising and, for the first time, about the earlier attempts to assassinate Hitler. The field marshal opposed the assassination attempts as he did not want Hitler to be made a martyr. His idea was to seize Hitler's person through reliable armored units in order to bring him before a German court. ..

Almost daily, leading personalities from the Reich came to the oasis of Rommel's staff, far from the clutches of the Gestapo, to talk things over and look for ways to save themselves from the increasingly hopeless situation. . . In the first days of May, Ernst Jünger, a captain on the staff of the French military commander, delivered his peace pamphlet, the ideas for which he had already developed in the winter of 1941/42. Field Marshal Rommel was impressed by his ideas, especially the constructive reconstruction plans with the demand for a United States of Europe in the spirit of Christian humanity. He envisaged the publication of this historical and human document on a broad basis in due course."

This beautiful peace treatise by Emst Jünger should have been brought to the attention of the real war instigators Roosevelt and Churchill instead of paralyzing the mental resistance in their own ranks and thus serving the enemies of the country. All of the actions of Rommel's staff for the purpose of subversion were permanent subversion of military strength and sabotage of the German war effort.

Speidel's report continues: "On April 14, Lord Mayor Dr. Strölin, Stuttgart, on

behalf of the former Lord Mayor Dr. Goerdeler, had also expressed the wish for a joint discussion between the Field Marshal and the former Reich Foreign Minister Baron Constantin von Neurath, so that the latter's foreign policy experience could also be utilized. Rommel valued Baron von Neurath as an old-school diplomat who was opposed to National Socialism due to his aristocratic convictions; he also felt close to his Swabian compatriot. Neurath's son had been on his staff in Africa for a long time. However, a trip by Rommel to Neurath and Dr. Strölin would not have gone unnoticed by the Secret State Police. For this reason, Rommel authorized his Chief of the General Staff (Speidel, the author) to conduct the discussion with Freiherr von Neurath and Dr. Strölin. It took place on May 27, 1944 in Freudenstadt and served as an exchange of information between the West and the homeland...

Lord Mayor Dr. Strölin pointed above all to the central problem of the person of Adolf Hitler, with whom foreign countries would not make any political agreements. Only his removal would make a new creative policy possible. However, action would have to be taken quickly - even before the invasion. For holding the front was a precondition for all intentions . . . Both men asked that an urgent appeal be made to the field marshal to make himself available to save the Reich, whether as commander-in-chief of the Wehrmacht or as interim head of state. . .

The possibilities of entering into talks with the Western Allies were also discussed: via the Vatican, via the British ambassador in Madrid, Sir Samuel Hoare, and via Swiss connections. Exploratory talks had already been initiated with the other side via Rome, Madrid and Lisbon, but without result. . .

In a second meeting, the connection between the resistance camps was established more closely and a communication route with the Rommel command post was determined, which proved successful and remained undetected.

The field marshal approved the content of the discussions and informed Freiherr von Neurath and Dr. Strölin that the preparatory measures had been initiated and that he was ready for any operation without any personal claim." (Hans Speidel, "Invasion 1944", page 85ff.)

The Commander-in-Chief West, Field Marshal von Rundstedt, was openly informed by Rommel, von Falkenhausen and von Stülpnagel about their discussions and thoughts. At a meeting of the aforementioned generals, which dealt with the formulation of joint demands to Hitler, von Rundstedt said to Rommel: "You are young, you know and love the people.
young, the people know and love you, you must do it!" As a result of all the consultations, Rommel and Speidel, with significant input from Stülpnagel, laid down the following ideas in the form of a mobilization calendar:

"West: to establish the conditions for an armistice with Generals Eisenhower and Montgomery without Hitler's participation. Field Marshal Rommel was in charge of the negotiations: General of Infantry Karl Heinrich von Stülpnagel, General of Armour Baron Leo von Schweppenburg, Lieutenant General Dr. Hans Speidel, Lieutenant General Count Gerd von Schwerin, Vice Admiral Friedrich Rüge, Lieutenant Colonel of the Reserve Dr. Caesar von Hofacker.

The following negotiating principles for an armistice were envisaged: Evacuation of the occupied western territories, return of the western army behind the Siegfried Line, handover of the administration of the occupied western territories to the Allies. Immediate cessation of the enemy's bombing campaign against the homeland. The armistice - not an unconditional surrender - was to be followed by negotiations for a peace that would point the way to order and not chaos. - Field Marshal Rommel expected that the Allies would give such an opportunity.

Appeal to the German people from all Western broadcasters: relentless information about the true political and military situation and its causes, and about the crimes of Hitler's leadership. Inform the troops about the necessity of all measures to save them from catastrophe.

Home: Arrest Adolf Hitler in order to bring him before a German court. Execution by the resistance forces in the Army High Command, or by armored units to be brought in ... . Provisional takeover of government power in Germany by the resistance forces of all classes and estates under the leadership of Colonel General Beck, Lord Mayor Dr. Goerdeler and the former Hessian Minister of the Interior and trade union leader Leuschner ...

East: Continuation of the battle, for this purpose holding a shortened eastern front in the approximate line of the mouth of the Danube, Carpathians, Lemberg, Vistula, Memel, immediate evacuation of Courland and other 'fortresses'.

Preparations were to be accelerated so that action could be taken before the start of the invasion. A firmly established western front was a prerequisite for any negotiations that might become necessary. It was therefore the constant concern of all." (Hans Speidel, "Invasion 1944", page 90ff.)

With the ideas outlined above, our conspirators were beyond any reality. In view of the explanation Roosevelt gave his generals, it was completely unrealistic for Rommel to expect the Allies to take a chance. The fact that Churchill received the
The fact that Churchill answered the requests of the resistance in milder tones was merely an expression of his dangerous cunning. Why should he deny the German conspiracy the last vestige of willingness to negotiate when he could maintain their absolute will to overthrow with this meagre promise?

Certainly, the idea that "a firmly entrenched Western Front" was the best prerequisite for an armistice was logical, but it was not in fact "the unceasing concern of all" that this should be maintained.

As grotesque as it may seem, Rommel and Speidel, who called for a firmly established Western Front for any negotiations that became necessary, themselves seriously disregarded the premise they postulated, as will be shown below, because their military measures to repel the invasion were too subordinate to the preparations for the coup. Like the leading group in Berlin under Beck-Stauffenberg and those in the central section of the Eastern Front under von Tresckow, the conspirators on the invasion front were now living more in the fever of overthrow than in the spirit of the fighting front. This is the only way to understand their illusion that opponents such as Roosevelt and Churchill would be able to accept

their ceasefire offers in the slightest.

All senior military leaders whose minds were not clouded by the spirit of resistance shared the view of Colonel General Heinz Guderian: "Any thought of negotiations with the enemy, either as a whole or with the eastern or western opponent separately, had become irrelevant from the outset due to the demand for unconditional surrender, which was made jointly by all our opponents." (Heinz Guderian, "Erinnerungen eines Soldaten", page 335.)

The above statement characterizes the political attitude of the leaders responsible on the invasion front. But what about the military preparations for the imminent invasion battle? According to Rommel's basic concept, the beach had to be the main battle line. In order to avoid long marches to the battlefield with heavy losses, the battle with the landed invasion forces had to be started immediately on the coast. When the enemy landed, it was clear that they were in their weakest state, which had to be exploited. Invasion forces are insecure, more or less seasick, their heavy weapons are not yet available and the beach is unknown. Instead of a deeply divided defense in the conventional sense, Rommel wanted a defensive division directly on the coast with heavy weapons and artillery. He also demanded that the armored divisions be grouped in such a way that they could immediately intervene in the defensive battle.

Unlike Field Marshal von Rundstedt, however, Rommel was in a different position
and Panzer General Freiherr Geyr von Schweppenburg, who wanted to fight the decisive battle far behind the coast, where they could operate outside the range of Allied naval guns. Hitler tended to favor Rommel's view in this dispute and rejected Geyr's plan. The armored divisions did not stay as far inland as Rundstedt and Geyr wanted, but neither did they stay as close to the coast as Rommel thought necessary. It was a compromise solution that ultimately led to unsuccessful operations when the going got tough.

Rommel did everything possible to secure France's coast against a landing fleet. For the beach, which was submerged at high tide, he invented the landing trestles with mines and steel saws on which the landing craft were to be beached. He had hundreds of so-called Czech hedgehogs brought in from old Czech stocks and thrown onto the beach. In the hinterland, he had the tall stakes known as "Rommelspargel" (Rommel asparagus) driven into the ground in meadows and fields to prevent airborne landings. Finally, he ordered the commanders, who could not be convinced of the effectiveness of his means: "I forbid any training service and demand that every minute be used for work on the beach obstacles. For it is on the beach that the invasion will be decided, and in the first 24 hours." (Paul Carell, "They are coming", page 16.)

On June 5, 1944, one day before the start of the invasion, as on the days before, the staffs everywhere, in Brittany, Normandy, the Paris region, Belgium, southern France, the Pas de Calais, Holland, were busy with reports of enemy flights, bombings, etc., which could not fail to include reports on the weather situation. For

it depended above all on the weather whether the invasion was to be expected. On June 5, it was a week that was favorable for a landing in terms of the ebb and flow of the tide, the phase of the moon and the general weather situation. The naval commander Normandi i e, Rear Admiral Hennecke, therefore urgently questioned the head of his weather station about the weather situation on June 5. He was particularly suspicious that day because the officer in charge of the weather station had reported that there had been conspicuously strong movements on the radar screen the previous night, which could indicate larger groups of ships.

But Admiral Hennecke was told by the weather forecasters that the sea was rough, visibility was poor and the wind was force 5 to 6; probably not even the usual air attacks were to be expected. When the admiral asked what the weather was likely to be like the next day, he was told that the weather was unlikely to change at short notice. This meant that the next weather situation favorable for a landing was not to be expected until the second half of June.

At the headquarters of the 7th Army in Le Mans, Colonel General Dollmann also asked his Chief of Staff, Major General Pemsel, about the weather situation and whether anything could happen. Pemsel was able to point to the meteorologists' reassuring explanation, not without adding doubtfully whether the weathermen could be relied upon. But the commander-in-chief ignored the words of doubt and thought of the days that had been won back to construct even more beach obstacles, build bunkers and bring in coastal artillery, because in the summer of 1944, with the exception of the Pas de Calais, the Atlantic Wall consisted only of a chain of widely spaced, sometimes only half-finished bases.

Since, in Dollmann's opinion, the weather conditions did not indicate the danger of a landing, he ordered his division commanders, each with two regimental commanders, to Rennes in Brittany on June 6 for a commanders' meeting followed by a war game. Despite the reassuring forecast of the meteorologists, the Chief of Staff of the 7th Army felt uneasy that the entire front of the 7th Army was to be stripped of its most important troop leaders for two days. He therefore advised various division commanders by telex not to leave for Rennes before dawn, because if, contrary to expectations, a landing did take place, it would come in the early hours of the morning. And clarity would prevail until before daybreak.

However, this advice was of little use to the divisional commanders far from Rennes, as they would not have been able to arrive in time for the meeting, which was scheduled for 10 a.m., due to the bombed-out roads. It was 190 kilometers from the command post of General von Schlieben's 709th Division near Valognes, for example. Schlieben therefore set off on the afternoon of the 5th with the permission of the 84th Corps. General Falley of the 91st Airborne Division was not much closer from Chateau Haut and set off at nightfall because "there was nothing to worry about in this miserable weather".

"Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, the commander-in-chief of Army Group B, military master of the entire northern French coastal front", Paul Carell reports, "had also allowed himself to be tempted by the bad weather to combine the pleasant with

the useful and had left his staff quarters, the old thousand-year-old castle of the Dukes of Rochefoucauld, La Roche Guyon, for Germany on the morning of the 5th. He wanted to pay a short visit to his wife, whose birthday was on June 6, and then drive on to Berchtesgaden to give a lecture to Hitler. A very important lecture. Objective: to reinforce the coastal front. Rommel wanted to wrest the transfer of two more armored divisions and a Nebelwerfer brigade to Normandy from the Führer. There is an entry in his diary: 'The most urgent
problem was to convince the Führer in a personal conversation . . (Paul Carell, "They are coming", page 14.)

On the enemy side, the weather situation was also the biggest problem of all. Anthony Cave Brown describes Eisenhower's last crucial briefing before the Normandy landings: "Eisenhower," Mueller later recalled, "seemed weighed down with worry, just as if each of the four stars on his shoulder weighed a ton." Still gloomy, he arrived at Southwick House at 4:15 for the final high command conference. A new working week had begun, one of the most memorable in history.

Everyone was in battle dress, except Montgomery, who wore a high-necked, fawn-colored sweater and light corduroy trousers. Eisenhower was, as always, properly and carefully dressed. Opposite him sat the other members of the High Command on armchairs and sofas, their faces serious; it was quiet in the room1. At a signal from Eisenhower, Stagg (Chief Meteorologist, Group Captain John Stagg of the British Air Force, to whom Eisenhower was assigned, author's note) began his presentation with the words: 'Gentlemen, no major changes have occurred, and the minor ones I think I may interpret optimistically. "In his opinion, Tuesday was suitable for the opening of the invasion, at least for most of the day. Then "mixed" weather was to be expected, "but probably not so bad as to seriously jeopardize the important build-up phases of the operation". After his speech, as Stagg later wrote, "the tension seemed to evaporate, the Supreme Commander and his colleagues were changed. General Eisenhower had sat down; his face was turned toward me, and he listened with the greatest eagerness. Then a broad smile came over his face and he said: 'Well Stagg, if your prediction is correct, we'll celebrate when the time comes, I promise you."

Soon the men parted, and over the next hour Eisenhower sent a signal to all command posts and the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington that made as much history as Nelson's "England awaits . . .": "Halycon plus 5 finally and definitely confirmed". The die was cast, the invasion irrevocably set for June 6." (Anthony Cave Brown, "The Invisible Front", page 591.)

While the enemy was able to take advantage of a brief interim high on June 6 for its invasion, which its meteorologists had identified, the German staffs relied on their meteorologists' vague forecasts and left it to their usual routine everyday service. This, however, was to prove a bitter revenge, as the invasion took place after all, and without the German defense forces being alerted in time. The
staff of Rommel's Army Group B, led by the conspirator Speidel, made catastrophic omissions on the night of June 6, allowing the enemy to attack and eliminate the

German defensive and security forces in the Normandy coastal area with its airborne troops in completely unexpected night-time attacks and manoeuvres.

We learn how this came about from Paul Carell, who provides a detailed and authentic account of the invasion battle in his book "They are coming". Carell is able to draw on battle sketches, original orders and site plans, as well as reports from a few hundred volunteers - from ordinary soldiers to army commanders - who stood in a specific place on the invasion front.

Carell explains that the German command posts learned of the imminence of the invasion to the day from the Allied radio, but that the commanders-in-chief and their staffs responsible on the invasion front dismissed those Allied radio reports as nonsense.

In France, the Allied High Command had set up the aforementioned secret organization (SOE) for intelligence gathering and sabotage, which was spread throughout the occupied territory. Messages were transmitted by radio or carrier pigeons. The Allied staff in London had prepared the "Green" plan for Day X, with the aim of destroying over 500 French railroad stations and points and making 30 main lines impassable hours before the invasion. Alongside this was the "Tortoise" plan, which was aimed at disrupting telephone lines and blowing up crossroads, bridges and viaducts.

The main problem, the transmission of the operation order to the many section leaders in the various districts of France, was solved by means of an ingenious method via radio. The heads of the sabotage organization were instructed to listen carefully to the BBC's French broadcasts on the 1st, 2nd, 15th and 16th of each month and to listen for a code word, namely the first line of Paul Verlaine's poem about autumn. If it came between the other messages, it meant that the invasion was imminent. From then on, the radio broadcasts had to be listened to constantly to wait for the second half of the verse, the so-called B message. If it also came, it meant that the invasion would come within the next 48 hours.

Although the whole thing was well thought out and carefully prepared, one of the many confidants was in the German service and revealed the verse of the French poem to our intelligence service with the following wording:

> "Les sanglots longs des violons de I'automne blessent mon coeur d'une langueur monotone."

So it was that not only the rayon chiefs and the active saboteurs of the SOE listened carefully to the BBC broadcasts for the verse of the Verlaine poem, but also the specialists in the intelligence unit of Colonel-General Salmuth's 15th Army at Tourcoing headquarters waited for the saying, and their wait was rewarded. "The war diary of the 15th Army," Carell continues, "which stood between the Seine and the Meuse, contains five entries on June 5. The first says that the intelligence unit intercepted the first part of Verlaine's verse 'Les sanglots longs des violons de l'automne' on June 1, 2 and 3. The second entry reports under the time 21.15: "Second half of the verse 'Blessent mon coeur d'une langueur monotone'

intercepted."

The third, fourth and fifth entries at 9.30 p.m., 10.00 p.m. and 10.15 p.m. reveal the writer's dramatic excitement. They state that the sensational news, the big secret, was passed on to the Chief of the 15th Army, the Commander-in-Chief West, the general commands, the anti-aircraft division, the military commanders in Belgium and France as well as Army Group B and the OKW in Rastenburg. By 10:15 p.m. on June 5 at the latest, the OKW, Field Marshal von Rundstedt, the naval group staff in Paris and Army Group Rommel knew that the invasion was imminent.

Not a shot had been fired yet. The bombers were just taking off from the British airfields. And the transports with the airborne troops were taxiing to the runways. The pilots and paratroopers all believed in their secret. But their secret had already been revealed.

But don't worry - it won't do any harm. A great effort had been wasted, the first victory given away by the German High Command. Colonel General von Salmuth immediately put his 15th Army, which was not in the area of the coming events, on high alert. But nothing else happened. Nothing at all. The army group (Speidel, the author) did not alert its 7th Army and hours later let it become the unsuspecting victim of the most powerful attack in the history of war. The 84th Corps, against whose coastal divisions the first air and sea landings were directed, was taken by surprise. Neither the naval commander of Normandy, Admiral Hennecke, and his most important naval coastal batteries, nor the radar stations were alerted. Rommel was not immediately recalled from Herrlingen. His army group remained without its head for fourteen crucial hours, without the driving, all-dominant force. The Chief of Staff, General Speidel, was left to his own devices.

It can be conceded that General Jodl at the Führer's headquarters was of the opinion that Field Marshal von Rundstedt would sound the alarm. But he did not do so because he did not believe in the invasion. The standard American work on the history of the invasion quotes a word from his staff: 'General Eisenhower does not announce the invasion over the BBC broadcasts after all.'1The information was simply not believed. A line of poetry by Verlaine - laughable!

However, it remains unclear why the General Staff of Army Group B (Speidel, the author) was also guided by this sovereign contempt for psychological warfare.

Thus the victor of the German Abwehrohne remained fruit. The night from June 5 to 6 was spent in routine work, carefree and not infrequently in cozy cheerfulness." (Paul Carell, "They are coming", page 17ff.)

We learn less from Speidel himself than from other sources how the evening and night hours went. He himself reports in "Invasion 1944", page 89: "On June 5, 10 p.m., the 15th Army again intercepted a cue that led to the conclusion that the invasion had begun. The 15th Army had of course immediately alerted its troops and also informed the neighboring armies. Commander-in-Chief West, to whom the cue message was transmitted by telephone, refrained from alerting the entire front."

We learn more from the American Brown. In his book "The Invisible Front", page 598 ff., he asks: "Why did Commander-in-Chief West 'refrain from alerting the

entire front' even though he knew the meaning of the Verlaine lines? This remained one of the most impenetrable mysteries of the war.

Colonel Bodo Zimmermann from Rundstedt's staff later claimed that all troops in the west had been put on alert. He told the Americans who interrogated him after the war: "On June 5 at 9:15 p.m., (Meyer-Detring, an intelligence officer) brought the alarming news that the enemy radio had broadcast several times a cue calling on the resistance movement throughout France to rise up immediately. This practically meant the mobilization of the resistance movement for the coming night. The message was therefore taken very seriously. (Rundstedt) ordered that this message be passed on with a general warning to all units and offices in his command area.

Then he (Zimmermann, the author) added, and since his early release from Allied captivity depended to a certain extent on the truthfulness of his statement, it may be regarded as a kind of testimony: 'Army Group B, which was aware of this report, was ordered by (von Rundstedt) to go to alert level II (highest alert level) for its entire command.
alert) for its entire command area (Wehrmacht Commander Netherlands, 15th Army and 7th Army: e). . According to Zimmermann, this process was completed shortly after midnight - i.e. before any reports of a landing in France had been received. According to this, however, all German forces in the west, including the navy and air force, should have been on high alert when the first Allied paratroopers jumped off, but this was not the case.

Colonel Anton Staubwasser, Rommel's chief of intelligence, who was on duty in the castle of La Roche-Guyon that night, told a completely different story during the interrogation:

'At about 10 p.m., the Third General Staff Officer of the 15th Army reported to me by telephone that one of these cues had been intercepted again and that the 15th Army had therefore ordered a state of alert for its units on its own initiative. I (Speidel, the author) immediately made a report... and since the High Command of Army Group B had no documents to assess the significance of the intercepted cue, he ordered me to obtain a decision from Rundstedt's headquarters (whether the Army Group and the 7th Army should be put on alert).

Speidel had just given his brother-in-law Dr. Horst and Rommel's friend Ernst Jünger a small dinner in his castle. It was a kind of secret meeting of the Black Orchestra in the West, and the subject of the conversation was the 22-page draft which, according to Speidel, the philosopher and writer Ernst Jünger had drawn up at Rommel's instigation as the basis for armistice negotiations with England and America. On Speidel's orders, Staubwasser contacted Rund- stedt's headquarters.

Under interrogation, he testified: 'During this telephone conversation, which I conducted personally, a staff officer on special assignment conveyed to me the order of the OB West to refrain from alerting the general troops.'

And so, at least according to Staubwasser, the 7th Army on the invasion coast was not put on alert and, of course, neither was the 84th Corps, which was responsible for Utah and Omaha (the American combat sectors, author's note) and

most of the British sector. It was not until 2:15 a.m., when the attack from the air was already underway, that the 7th Army ordered its divisions to go on high alert.

How can the fundamental difference in the reports on the events at Rundstedt's and Rommel's headquarters be explained? Who was the 'staff officer on special assignment' who ordered Staubwasser not to put the troops on alert? According to Hitler's conviction, either traitors or British agents must have been at work at OB West.

had been at work. In any case, he set up an investigation to clarify why so many staff and troop commanders were not at their posts that night, why a war game had been scheduled in Rennes, why the 15th Army was on alert but not the 7th Army. In the course of this investigation, Speidel, whose behavior that evening seemed suspicious to the Gestapo, was also arrested on suspicion of high treason. He was more or less accused of deliberately not alerting the 7th Army so as not to unnecessarily complicate the Allied landings and their advance through France and Germany and to pay for it with senseless sacrifices. Later rumors circulated that the Allies, mainly the Americans, had rewarded him with a NATO high command after the war." (Anthony Cave Brown, "The Invisible Front", page 598ff.)

David Irving addressed Speidel's failure to alert the 7th Army in time in a speech he gave to the congress of the Gesellschaft für freie Publizistik held in Kassel from May 26 to 28, 1978. He explained that on June 5, 1944, at 10:15 p.m., Speidel had received a telephone message from Colonel General v. Salmuth's 15th Army, according to which the invasion was to be expected within a few hours. Speidel had then instructed his intelligence officer to ask the Commander-in-Chief West in Paris what they thought and what should be done. "Do nothing" was the answer, and Speidel acted accordingly. He did not believe that it was the invasion, but a diversionary maneuver and that we would have to wait and see.

Irving also reported in his speech that Speidel had, according to the diary entry of Vice-Admiral Rüge, who had attended the evening meeting at Rommel's headquarters on June 5, gone "to his bunk" at 1 a.m. to sleep for three hours.

Speidel had news of the start of the invasion by 10.15 p.m. on June 5 at the latest, but General Marek, commander of the decisive 84th Corps, against which the first enemy landings were directed, was not told. After midnight, he was still busy preparing for the war game in Rennes, for which he had been ordered to Rennes by the commander of the 7th Army, Colonel General Dollmann. However, Dollmann himself was unable to cancel the war game in Rennes, for which the most important commanders were already on their way, because the "good nerves" of the conspirator Speidel did not allow him to be informed immediately. "One had to have the nerve to wait," it says in Speidel's report, page 99. "Constant calls from the High Command of the Wehrmacht and the Commander-in-Chief West testified to the nervousness at the highest levels. An issue of operational directives

was out of the question in the first few hours (of the invasion, author's note) until reports and the reconnaissance units immediately dispatched everywhere had brought clarity."

"In the first hour of the morning of June 6," says Speidel, "the Chief of the General Staff of Army Group B received reports of parachute jumps in the area of Caen and in the south-eastern part of the Contentin peninsula . . Between 3.00 and 4.00 a.m. the reports of parachute jumps became more frequent. Bombs were also dropped on coastal fortifications and strong enemy air forces were reported approaching. The armored divisions in reserve were made ready to march. The non-subordinate General Command of the I SS Panzer Corps was immediately instructed to contact the corps of General of Artillery Erich Mareks commanding the Calvados and Contentin coasts and the deployed divisions.

The 21st Armored Division was ordered to move into its reconnoitered staging areas south of Caen. The High Command of the Wehrmacht and the Commander-in-Chief West were informed.

5.30 a.m. The shelling of the Calvados coast by hundreds of naval guns began abruptly. The long-planned automatic defensive measures began. The orders prepared for the 'Normandy case' were issued.

The Chief of the General Staff of Army Group B (Speidel, the author) reported the situation and initial measures, which Field Marshal Rommel approved, to his commander-in-chief by telephone to Herrlingen between 6.00 and 6.30 a.m. on June 6. He immediately canceled the onward journey to Berchtesgaden and arrived back at his command post in La Guyon between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. on June 6."

So what had happened in the night hours up to 5.30 a.m., when Speidel issued the prepared orders for the "Normandy case", at the front of the troops, where no overthrow talks took place by the fireside and the loyal front fighter had to give his last?

In order to arrive in time for the war game in Rennes, Major General Falley and his Ib had already departed from the 91st Airborne Division command post near Picauville on the night of June 6. When, at dawn, the enemy's incursions against the hinterland roared over him, Falley, as an experienced front-line officer, suspected nothing good and ordered his driver: "Turn around, back to the command post!"

The car turns off the main road directly into enemy MPi fire. General Falley jumps out of the car and fires two shots from his Walter pistol. Then Falley and his Ib Bartuzat fall in the enemy MPi fire. The commander of the 91st Airborne Division is dead before he can give a single order.

When the battle groups of the 91st Airborne Division and the 709th Division were deployed late and without artillery support, without tank destroyers and without anti-aircraft support for the unsuccessful attack against the American paratroopers to capture and save the W5 base, it became apparent that the two German divisions were without a leader at the decisive hour. Falley had fallen on the way to Rennes, and Lieutenant General von Schlieben had only returned from Rennes to his command post around noon on June 6. (Paul Carell, "They are coming", page 51 ff.)

It was forty minutes past midnight when the commander of the III Battalion of the 919th Grenadier Regiment looked at his watch. For the past hour, a constant

hum of aircraft had been heard over his command post east of Montebourg. The commander stepped outside the bunker and suddenly saw six giant birds approaching his command post. As he saw men jumping off, he first thought that one of the planes was faulty, until he realized that it was an enemy paratrooper mission. No sooner had he alerted his guards, who were keeping watch for the descending enemy, than the first stream of fire from an American MPi flashed out of the darkness. The enemy's surprise was complete.

The German sentry on the east side of the bridge over the canal at Be-nouville flinched when an airplane suddenly hurtled towards the ground not far from his post without the sound of an engine, causing it to crash and splinter. The sentry tore the carbine from his shoulder and unloaded. A crashed bomber, he thought and listened, holding his breath. A hand grenade crashed and knocked him down. The comrades in the dugout scrambled together, jumped to the machine gun and chased out a sheaf. But the three platoons of the 6th British Airborne Division's battle group were stronger than the bridge guard, and the crossing over the Caen Canal at Benouville fell into British hands in a surprise attack.

The guard at the Dives Bridge, which crosses the Varaville-Grangues road, was also overpowered in a surprise attack and the bridge was blown up by the British. The Dives Bridge at Robehomme is similarly destroyed. And the vital bridge at Troarn, over which the main road from Caen to Rouen and Le Havre crosses the river, was blown up by British sappers.

"Before the first planes took off from England on D-day for the bombing raids against the Normandy coast, the German high command in France knew that the invasion had begun. It literally had the proof on the table. Only - it did not use it. This is not a legend. The report on this sensation is in the official American war history book on the invasion; the proof can be found in
in the war diary of the German 15th Army. Treachery and the art of counterintelligence had revealed the great secret, had broken into its finely spun web. No German staff officer, no base commander and no Landser need have been surprised by the invasion on June 6. (Paul Carell, "They are coming", page 17ff.)

The conspirator Speidel was well aware of the opinion of his commander-in-chief Rommel, but he did not act accordingly. He did not immediately alert the Army Group's defensive forces in order to give the enemy all the tactical advantages of his surprise attacks, he did not inform Rommel of the start of the invasion before 11 p.m. on June 5, and he did not make sure that at least the 21st Panzer Division was deployed in the early morning of the first day of the invasion.

According to his records, the commander of the 716th Infantry Division gave the commander of the 21st Panzer Division, General Feuchtinger, who was under his command, the order by telephone at 1.20 a.m. on the night of June 6 to attack and smash the enemy forces that had landed in the air with the nearest parts of the Panzer Division. At 2.00 a.m., Richter supplemented his order to Feuchtinger to attack the airborne enemy east of the Orne with the entire armored division and fight to clear the area. In the event of an attack, the 21st Panzer Division was

subordinated to the 716th Infantry Division, on whose shoulders the coastal defense in the British land section lay. But Feuchtinger felt bound by the orders of the OKW and waited in vain for authorization to deploy, which he did not even have to wait for, because his division was in the combat zone, to which the military law applied that the enemy entering the combat zone must be attacked.

Only at about 6.00 a.m., after constant urging by Corps General Mareks and General Richter and after an agitated discussion, did General Feuchtinger decide to intervene with his armored division on his own responsibility. But hours passed before the widely dispersed companies had their marching orders. It was the afternoon of June 6 when the first tank counterattack finally rolled onto the British beachhead. Eight hours after the landing, at least six hours too late. Had Rommel been at the front in the early hours of June 6, his presence and authority would have been enough to allay the concerns of Panzer General Feuchtinger and take full responsibility for the immediate deployment of the 21st Panzer Division.

The 12th SS Panzer Division and the Panzer-Lehrdivision could also have started the attack on the morning of June 6 at 10:00 a.m. at the latest if they had been alerted in time. The commander of the Panzer Lehrdivision, Lieutenant General Bayerlein, had already been alerted at 2.30 a.m. by General Warlimont
from the Führer's headquarters. The Jabo danger from the enemy air force would not have made this mission impossible, as the morning of June 6 was hazy and rainy and would have allowed a fairly undisturbed march to the front.

General Pickert, commander of the III Flak Corps, who had the task of going into the beachhead with his anti-aircraft forces in the event of a landing on the Normandy coast, had no news of the landings on the morning of June 6. The corps' batteries were on the Somme. Three regiments, about six divisions were available, a strong firepower and a backbone for attack and defense. Only in the afternoon, when Pickert returned from an inspection tour, did he receive the first reports, with the proviso that it was not yet clear whether it was the Great Invasion. (Paul Carell, "They are coming", page 116ff.)

However, it was not only the sensational report from the 15th Army's intelligence unit under Colonel-General Salmuth that should have alerted all the forces on the Normandy front, but also that of an intelligence company located on the Channel Island of Guemsey. Retired Colonel Hans Oelze, the commander of the security regiment, which was also located on this Channel Island, reported the following about this message:

"On the evening of June 5, an air intelligence company, equipped with the best Freya and Würzburg locators available at the time, was stationed on the Channel Island of Guernsey, which had been captured by the German Wehrmacht.

At around 10.40 p.m., four-engined heavy Lancaster bombers appeared on their screens in regular formation and at constant intervals; behind each aircraft, at the same distance, another missile could be observed, which could soon be identified as a cargo glider.

A total of 180 of these "teams" are located by this one air intelligence company...

The company commander - conscious of his responsibility - wants to be absolutely sure before he sounds the alarm. He therefore asks the commander of a neighboring army security regiment to come to his observation post, who immediately confirms that it is not a figment of over-excited nerves.

Without further ado, the colonel bypasses all the relevant authorities in his long official channels and immediately contacts the superior general command of his corps in St. Lo (on the Norman coast). He asks for the Chief of Staff. He is unreachable. He now wants to speak to his First General Staff Officer (Ia). Absent. Plagued by distress, the Colonel now demands to see the Commanding General in person . . .

Then he bursts his collar: one of the gentlemen is in Paris for a meeting with the army group, the other is at a birthday party and one is on vacation, the duty officer, an orderly officer, tells him.

The colonel orders him, indeed implores him, to sound the airborne alert immediately, as he is sure that a major landing operation will be taking place on the mainland in the next few minutes. The officer on duty promises to do his utmost . . .

About 20 minutes later, the general command reports back. The gentlemen of the staff wished the comrade on the island a good night and advised him not to see any ghosts and not to drive the horses wild...

Another 20 minutes later, the Ia of the general command, all excited, now on the line himself: 'You were right. Big air landings behind the whole front. Alert!"

This delayed the defense against the Anglo-American invasion in the center of the front by at least thirty minutes. The Lancasters were able to drop their paratroopers without resistance to secure the landing sites and the cargo gliders could then land completely undisturbed behind the front line. . . " ("Deutsche Wochenzeitung" of January 11, 1974).

Speidel reports on the deployment of the 21st Panzer Division on the first day of the invasion, page 100f.: "During the morning teleconference with his Chief of the General Staff, the Field Marshal had once again expressly pointed out the probable necessity of an attack by the 21st Panzer Division and all the reserves available in its area under unified command. After Hitler, despite repeated requests, did not release any further reserves, the 21st Panzer Division launched a counterattack on both sides of the Orne at 10 a.m. on June 6 on the orders of the commanding general of the LXXXIV Army Corps, General der Artillerie Mareks. The thrust of the armored forces led to the coast and established contact with the parts of the 716th Division still holding their bases there. When the enemy dropped new airborne troops into the attacking armored units and into the area east of Caen, the local decision was made to break off the attack and fight the rearward parts free. This did the enemy a grave disservice and the initial success was not exploited. Just how unpleasant the attack by the 21st Panzer Division was for him can be seen from the deployment of his airborne units against these armored forces."

Speidel certainly knows who "made the local decision" to break off the successful attack. But why does he not mention his name in his book? -

Speidel goes on to write in the same place: "Field Marshal Rommel had repeatedly demanded the deployment of the I SS Panzer Corps with the 12th SS Panzer Division, Hitler Youth1 and the Panzer Training Division in the area between Caen and Falaise in May, and he wanted to make the demand again to Hitler on June 6. The immediate deployment of this armored corps with three panzer divisions at the moment of weakness of the enemy landing could have had some local success.

On the evening of June 6, with unrestricted sea and air supremacy, the enemy had formed a bridgehead 25 km wide and up to 10 km deep between Orne and the area north of Ryes, and a second bridgehead 15 km wide and 4 km deep in the southeast corner of the Cotentin."

A closer look at the placement of the German forces in the northern French area reveals that Rommel repeatedly requested Waffen-SS armored divisions for the Normandy front that belonged to the OKW reserve, such as those of the I SS Panzer Corps, while army armored divisions under his command were kept out of the defensive front, sometimes for many weeks. A precise overview of the distribution of forces at the time, with open criticism of the military leadership on the invasion front, is provided by Colonel General Heinz Guderian, Inspector General of Armored Troops and later successor to Colonel General in the office of Chief of Staff of the Army. Guderian explains:

"On 6/6/1944, the day of the invasion, there were 48 infantry divisions in France, 38 of them in the front line; of these, 5 were between the Scheldt and the Somme, 2 between the Somme and the Seine and 3 in Brittany.

10 Panzer and Panzergrenadier divisions; of these, there were:

8. SS-Panzer-Division 'LAH' in Beverloo (Belgium),
9. Panzer Division in the Amiens-Abbeville area,
5. Panzer Division east of Rouen (north of the Seine),
5. SS Panzer Division 'HJ' near Caen,

Panzer-Lehr-Division in the Le Mans-OrIl I eans-Chartres area,

2. SS-Panzer-Grenadier-Division around Saumur-Niort-Poitiers,
4. Panzer-Division around Bordeaux,

2nd SS-Panzer-Di ! vision,Reich4around Montauban-Toulouse,

IX. Panzer Division around Avignon-Nimes-Arles.

All hope of defensive success was based on these last 10 Panzer and Panzer-Grenadier divisions. With great difficulty, it had been possible to refresh and train these divisions to some extent.

Four of these divisions were under Rommel's command - the 2nd, 116th, 21st and 12th SS Panzer Divisions. The 1st SS Division, the Panzer Lehr Division and the 17th SS Panzer Grenadier Division were designated as OKW reserves. The 9th, 11th and 2nd SS Panzer Divisions were deployed in southern France against an expected landing on the Mediterranean coast.

This fragmentation made a major defensive success impossible from the outset. Apart from this, however, the course of events was as unpleasant as could be imagined. First of all, Rommel was on his way to give a lecture to Hitler on the day

of the invasion in Germany. Hitler had gone to bed late, as was his custom, and was not to be disturbed on June 6 when the first reports came in. Jodl, who was in charge of operations in his place, could not decide to immediately release the OKW reserves - three armored divisions after all - because he did not feel sure whether the Normandy landings were already the main operation or whether they were just a deception. Because the OKW was also unclear about the question of the landing in the Mediterranean, the armored divisions from southern France were not immediately called up either.

The 21st Panzer Division, which was on the invasion front, was - contrary to the training orders of General Frhr. v. Geyr - bound by Rommel's authorization to begin its counterattack and therefore missed the most suitable time to attack the British airborne troops. In fact, Rommel pushed the army's 116th Panzer Division even closer to the coast of Dieppe than it had already been and held it there until mid-July. The ignorance of some higher leaders in the use of the tanks, expressly ordered marches by day under the influence of the enemy air force - in the case of the Panzer-Lehr-Division - deployments to frontal counterattacks in the area of the superior enemy naval artillery, prematurely shredded the only powerful weapon that the German Reich was able to oppose the invasion. The armored forces suffered tremendous losses . . .

But even from the formation finally ordered, considerably more could have been achieved with clear leadership. On June 16, two weeks after the start of the invasion, the 116th Panzer Division of the army was still on the coast between Abbeville and Dieppe, the 11th Panzer Division near Bordeaux, the 9th Panzer Division near Avignon, and the 11th Panzer Division near Bordeaux. Panzer-Division near Avignon, the SS-Panzer-Division "Reich" in the gang fight in southern France, while the remaining SS-Panzer-Divisions, increased by the (9th and 10th) SS-Panzer-Divisions that had been transported from the east in the meantime, consumed their strength in heavy, frontal defensive battles in the face of naval artillery. Apart from the armored divisions, 7 infantry divisions also stood idly near the coast north of the Seine that day, awaiting a landing that never came. . .

After a delay of many days, the SS-Leibs I tandarte "AH" (from Beverloo, Belgium, author's note) and the 2nd Panzer Division (from the Amiens-Abbeville area, author's note) came to fragmented action... However, the proposals of General Frhr. v. Geyr for an attack with combined forces were rejected by Rommel, who had lost faith in the success of the attack.
had rejected them. It remains to be seen whether other political reasons also played a part in the delayed and fragmented deployment of the reserves." (Heinz Guderian, "Erinnerungen eines Soldaten", page 300ff.)

With this question, Guderian touches on the most sore point in the events of the invasion battle. In his annotation on page 302, he refers to Speidel, who states in his essay on page 71: "For political reasons, too, it seemed expedient to the field marshal to have reliable armored units at hand for any future events." In his footnote, Guderian gives the following further indication: "Cf. also Frhr. v. Geyr,

Invasion without Laureis4in No. 1, 1950 of the Irish journal 'An Cosantoir4: 'The 2nd Panzer Division (an Army, not an SS-unit) was held back by Rommel for some time, because in expectation ofthe '20thejuly Plot to assassinate Hitler, he wished to have a 'reliable' Army division available for any emergency. Although the situation at the front obliged him to commit the 2nd Panzers on the western sector ofthe battlefield, where it opposed the Ist U.S.-Division, Rommel did manage to keep the 116th Division in reserve until the middle ofjuly.4" And later: "His refusal (Rommel's) mav have had a political reason."

In German: Frhr. von Geyr (then commander of the armored forces under Rommel, the author), "Invasion ohne Lorbeer" in No. 1, 1950, of the Irish magazine "An Cosantoir": "Die 2. Panzer Division (an army, not an SS unit) was held back for some time by Rommel because he wanted to have a 'reliable' army division available for any eventuality in anticipation of the July 20 plot to assassinate Hitler. Although the situation on the front forced him to deploy the 2nd Panzer Division on the western section of the battlefield, where it faced the 1st US Division, Rommel was able to keep the 116th Panzer Division (an army division located east of Rouen north of the Seine, the author) in reserve until mid-July." And later: "His (Rommel's) refusal may have had a political reason."

"Rommel's refusal" refers to another paragraph of the same article that Freiherr von Geyr had published in the Irish magazine, in English of course. The author followed up on Guderian's reference and asked the Irish editor of the magazine "An Cosantoir" in 1973 for a copy of Geyr's article, which was kindly provided promptly, v. Geyr wrote in the section of his article of interest here: "The arrival of a number of infantry divisions was indicated to us with the instruction to withdraw three panzer divisions from the main battle line and place them together under the command of the I SS Panzer Corps as a mobile reserve. This was a suggestion to Rommel. Although his chief of staff agreed with the
agreed with the proposal, Rommel himself firmly rejected it. 'The infantry is not capable of taking on the task and will not take it on', was his reply.

There may have been a political reason for his refusal. It could not be expected that shortly before July 20, the day Hitler was to be eliminated, Rommel (who was a participant in the plot) would have been prepared to place three divisions under the command of the I SS Corps, which was loyal to Hitler and would therefore have been a direct danger to himself." ("An Cosantoir", 1950, No. 1.)

In December 1977, the leading German press announced the publication of a biography of Rommel by the well-known English war historian David Irving, which was to appear in German in the fall of 1978. In a book review in "Bild am S ' onntag" on December 11, 1977, it says: "In his detailed and undoubtedly deeply impressive book, the British historian also raises probing questions. One example: According to Irving, Rommel's chief of staff in the West, General Dr. Hans Speidel (who after the war became commander-in-chief of the NATO forces in Central Europe), is said to have prevented two German tank divisions from deploying early in the battle against the landed Allied invasion forces in Normandy. Irving reports

that Speidel confessed to former German tank commander Leo Geyr von Schweppenburg in 1947 that he had deliberately kept the 2nd and 116th Panzer Divisions out of the fighting so that they could be used in the conspiracy against Hitler.

War researcher Irving also claims that General Gerhard von Schwerin, the commander of the 116th Panzer Division, had already been informed by Speidel during the invasion battles that his division would be held back as a reserve for the planned overthrow of Hitler. After the war, however, Speidel first played down his statement to Geyr von Schweppenburg and then denied it."

The author has shown the very disastrous machinations of the conspirators on the invasion front, based on the article by Baron Geyr von Schweppenburg, who himself belonged to the conspiracy, as well as on the report by Knight Wilhelm von Schramm "Der 20. JuIli in Paris", in his documentation "Sabotage against Germany", published in 1974.

The American publicist Anthony Cave Brown, quoted repeatedly above, also deals with the removal of army armored divisions from the defensive front as follows: "From now on (after his last serious confrontation with Hitler in Margival on June 17, the author) Rommel was, according to Walter Bargatzky, a war administrator from Stülpnagel's staff, who was responsible for the legal planning in connection with the coup d'état, 'hardly any more'.
coup d'état, 'could hardly be held back and wanted to get things moving without further delay1. Bargatzky, later president of the German Red Cross and after the war a senior official in the West German Ministry of the Interior and Health, testified that Speidel had 'made it his business to ensure that all the larger SS units in France were deployed at the front on the day of the uprising, in order to protect Paris from their potential intervention*. This statement substantiated Speidel's claim that Rommel had planned to keep the army's armored units out of the battle as long as possible so that they would be fresh, intact and ready for action in the event of a counter-revolution by the SS in France. In fact, all SS combat units were heavily involved in the fighting." (Anthony Cave Brown, "The Invisible Front", page 656.)

The statement by Walter Bargatzky, to which Brown refers, comes from an interview with him on October 20, 1945 in Baden-Baden.

If Rommel had thrown the 2nd and 116th Army Panzer Divisions, which were held in reserve and were both in the immediate vicinity of the invasion area, into battle on the second day of the invasion at the latest, i.e. while the enemy was still weak, instead of waiting for the 1st SS Panzer Division lying in Belgium, which had a long and, in view of the enemy's air superiority, very dangerous approach to the front, this action, which alone was correct from a military-tactical point of view, could have decisively prevented the formation of an Allied bridgehead.

It is clear from this that Rommel and Speidel were no longer free from the consideration of their overthrow plans in their operational decisions to repel the enemy, no matter how anxious they may have been at first to maintain a firm front as a prerequisite for supposedly possible armistice negotiations.

Holding back army armored divisions for the purposes of the conspiracy was an outrageous betrayal of the fighting troops and the most serious sabotage of the German war effort.

After the start of the invasion, the conspiracy around Stülpnagel and Speidel had to be constantly prepared for the triggering of the coup by Stauffenberg's assassination attempt on Hitler and also be prepared for this with military forces. It was logical and consistent for the general staff of the conspiracy to tie down the armed forces of the Waffen-SS by deploying them on the invasion front, because they posed the greatest danger at the moment of the coup d'état.

Logically, their plan was to keep the Waffen-SS units away from the conspirators' headquarters in Paris and, if possible, to destroy them at the front by dispersing them. If this plan could not be realized, one of Stülpnagel's suggestions was that "when the British and Americans landed, they should not be resisted at all.
resistance at all, but open the gate to the Reich and the way to Berlin for them." (Wilhelm v. Schramm, "Der 20. Juli in Paris", page 23f.)

"Even before this, when Field Marshal von Rundstedt was still in overall command in the West, Tresckow had gone so far as to suggest to Stauffenberg that Speidel should take tactical measures to enable the Allies to break through the German lines." (Henrik Fraenkel and Roger Manvell, "Der 20. Juli" page 81.)

The active conspirator Colonel i. G. Freiherr von Gersdorff, who attempted to assassinate Hitler in the Berlin armory on March 21, 1943, influenced von Kluge in the same way as von Tresckow, after the latter had assumed supreme command of the Western Army and, after Rommel was seriously wounded, supreme command of Army Group B as well. Gersdorff was already familiar with Kluge from Army Group Center/Russia and during the invasion battle was Chief of Staff of the 82nd Infantry Corps, which was deployed in the Pas de Calais.

In his memoirs "Soldat im Untergang", page 151 ff., Gersdorff writes: " . . . On July 27, I received orders to report immediately to the headquarters of Army Group B at La Roche-Guyon___When I arrived at the magnificent castle on July 28 . . . on July 28, the field marshal was walking with the duke in the castle garden... After my report to the Field Marshal, the Duke took his leave. Kluge and I continued our conversation where we had ended it four days earlier:

Kluge: 'You spoke the other day of a decision. What are you thinking about?

I: 'I am convinced that there is only one option left. As OB West, you must enter into negotiations with the Western Allies immediately. I think it is technically possible to establish radio contact with the commander-in-chief of the 12th American Army Group, General Omar Bradley, and in this way initiate verbal negotiations with him and possibly also with Field Marshal Montgomery at short notice. The basis of the negotiations should be: cessation of all hostilities, planned withdrawal of all German forces on the Western Front behind the 1939 borders, i.e. evacuation of France, Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg, guarantee for the elimination of the Nazi regime.

To this end, reliable combat units would have to be quickly detached from the

front in order to bring about a seizure of power in Germany. The defense of Germany's eastern border must be achieved with the mass of all released forces, with the aim of achieving a ceasefire there as well.

Kluge: 'Gersdorff, if that goes wrong, then Field Marshal v. Kluge will be the biggest pig in world history.

Me: 'Mr. Field Marshal, faced with the decision of either being condemned by history or to go down in it as a savior in dire straits - all the great men of world history have had to face this choice.4

Kluge put a hand on my shoulder and said: 'Gersdorff, Field Marshal v. Kluge is not a great man.4

We met again at dinner. It was attended by Field Marshal v. Kluge, his Chief of the General Staff, General Dr. Hans Speidel, the General of the Intelligence Corps, Lieutenant General Gehrke, and Lieutenant General Elfeldt, who was to replace the Commanding General of the LXXXIV Army Corps, v. Choltitz. During dinner, the Ia of the army group, Colonel (retired) v. Tempelhoff, reported to the field marshal that the 7th Army had just announced its decision to break through to the south-east. This meant the loss of contact with the west coast of the Cotentin Peninsula and the possibility for the Americans to break through to the south into open French territory.

Kluge was furious. He demanded an immediate telephone connection with the commander-in-chief of the 7th Army, SS-Oberstgruppenführer Haussen This was established, but it was so bad that communication and conversation were hardly possible. Kluge only ever shouted into the telephone: 'I forbid the breakthrough to the south-east. You must maintain contact with the coast.4

Then, still upset about the 7th Army's decision, he turned to me and said: 'Go to the 7th Army immediately and relieve the Chief of the General Staff, General Pemsel. Do everything you can to reverse the 7th Army's unfortunate decision. A hole at Avranches means the loss of the war.4 He wanted General Elfeldt and me to leave immediately, but General Speidel asked him not to send us off until the early morning of the next day, as we might fall into the hands of the maquis if we left at night.

On July 29, Elfeldt and I drove early in the morning to Le Mans, where the main command post of Army High Command 7 was located . . . After a difficult journey, during which we repeatedly had to seek cover from enemy low-flying aircraft, we reached the forward army command post at Chavoy (about 6 km north-east of Avranches) in the late afternoon. General Elfeldt immediately drove on to the LXXXIV Corps command post. He knew what was important.

General Pemsel was dismayed when I informed him of his relief. The communications with the army group were so bad that the preliminary orientation I had requested had not come through. I immediately tried to exhaust all possibilities to stop an American breakthrough at Avranches. Very soon, however, I saw that everything was too late. Our location was between two main roads leading to there, on which motorized combat forces of the 3rd US Army were already rolling south.

were already rolling south. All we could do was patch up the situation, which could not reverse the breakthrough the Americans had already made."

In the case of Avranches, the conspirator Speidel, a man who was known for his nerves of steel and his ability to bide his time when immediate and swift action was required, also ensured that Gersdorff and Elfeldt arrived at the 7th Army command post half a day later than Kluge had wanted in order to reverse a disastrous decision.

On August 12, Speidel called Gersdorff. "When I answered in the negative to his question as to whether the field marshal was with us, he ordered as many officers as possible to be sent out immediately in search of the commander-in-chief. My first thought was: now Kluge has listened to my suggestions after all. Apparently, headquarters also believed that he wanted to make contact with the enemy. The telephone inquiries about his whereabouts continued. Kluge only arrived late in the evening. He had gotten stuck in traffic jams and was repeatedly delayed by enemy low-flying aircraft. The radio station accompanying him had been shot down and destroyed. I still remember him saying ironically: 'Imagine Field Marshal v. Kluge having to play traffic police all day. ' He had undoubtedly made no attempt to establish radio contact with the Western Allies.

On August 15, Kluge appeared for the last time at the army command post, which had meanwhile been moved to the vicinity of Flers. In private, he said that he would be replaced by Field Marshal Model and should report to the Führer's headquarters. It was clear what this meant. He would therefore now take the action he had long intended to take... All attempts to dissuade him from his decision and to take political action instead failed. He said goodbye to me in a shattering manner. Three days later he took his own life while traveling to Germany between Verdun and Metz."

According to Brown's account, Hitler was convinced that "Kluge had tried to surrender to Montgomery with the German armies in the west on that day. Both he and Keitel claimed that Kluge was in radio contact with the British. Keitel explained that Kluge's radio communications had been intercepted by a listening company that had been set up after Hitler's suspicions had been aroused by the cease-fire that had accompanied the exchange of nurses in early July. . . Guderian explained: "Hitler was desperate . . . when Kluge did not reappear . . .'"

Had Kluge really tried to offer the enemy surrender? Hitler believed so. At the Führer briefing on August 31, he said: "Field
Marshal von Kluge wanted to surrender with the entire army in the west and defect to the enemy himself . . . It seems his intention was thwarted by an enemy Jabo attack. He had sent his general staff officer away, British-American reconnaissance troops came to meet him, but apparently no contact was made . . . After all, the British reported that they were in contact with a German general."

On June 25, 1945, Time magazine wrote in a report on Kluge's disappearance, which probably came from Patton (the American tank general who made the breakthrough at Avranches, author's note): "The road to Avranches. One day last August (Kluge) suddenly left his staff quarters on the Wes I tfront. . . With some

officers from his staff, Kluge drove to a spot on a lonely road near Avranches in northwest France. There he waited for hours for a group of officers from the American 3rd Army, with whom he had secretly arranged surrender negotiations. The Americans did not show up. Kluge feared that he had been betrayed and hurried back to his staff quarters."

The reporter continues: "On the day of the agreed meeting, the road to Avranches, which the officers of the 3rd Army wanted to use, was blocked by an Allied air raid. When the American negotiators arrived at the agreed location, Kluge had already left." This and other similar reports in the American (but not the British) press were confirmed by Dulles, who later wrote that Kluge had "made a futile attempt to surrender to General Patton's army somewhere in the Falaise pocket . . ." (Anthony Cave Brown, "The Invisible Front", page 73 lf.)

"How much did Kluge know about the July 20 conspiracy? Did he try to surrender to the Allies with the German armies in the West?" asks Brown. "These questions could not be answered until the spring of 1975, when the last files of the U.S. War Department Histrical Commis- sion's Intelligence Branch in the National Archives were made available to the public, containing the affidavit of the German military physician Dr. Udo Esch, which he made to the special agent Montford H. Schaffner on October 23, 1945. It concerns "von Kluge's participation in the July 20 coup and his subsequent suicide."

Esch was Kluge's son-in-law and chief physician in a military hospital in Paris. He had always been in close contact with Kluge on both the Russian and French fronts and claimed: 'According to the words and actions of my father-in-law, I always considered him to be an opponent of Nazism.
meeting between Kluge, Tresckow and Go > erdeler in Berlin in 1943. He offered evidence that the meeting had taken place and that Kluge had participated in the conspiracy. Even more revealing were Esch's statements about Kluge's involvement in the conspiracy after he had replaced Rundstedt as Commander-in-Chief West. He said that he had been with his father-in-law 'almost daily' and had learned that the conspiracy was 'maturing'. Esch also reported: 'My father-in-law asked me to get poison for him and the other conspirators in case their plan failed.* He complied with this request and filled seven ampoules with cyanide during a vacation in the laboratory of the University of Leipzig. When he returned to Paris, the leading men of the conspiracy each received a vial.

Esch's testimony indicated that both Kluge and Rommel were aware of the impending assassination attempt against Hitler and that Kluge had said on July 19 that it would take place the next day. This was perhaps proof that Kluge was privy to the Black Orchestra's plans, although he denied knowing anything about it when the conspirators came to La Roche-Guyon on the evening of July 20 to ask for his support and cooperation.

Esch claimed that Kluge had really tried to surrender to the Allies. He testified: 'After this failure (of the assassination attempt, the author) my father-in-law thought of surrendering to the Allies with the Western Front on his own responsibility, in the

hope of overthrowing the National Socialist regime with their help. At first he only spoke to me about this plan, and I doubt that his chief of staff, General Speidel, was in on it. He strongly doubted that the Waffen-SS and the Luftwaffe would go along with it, but he hoped for a surprise success.

It was not clear from Esch's statement how Kluge wanted to surrender. He merely said: 'He went to the front, but was unable to establish contact with the Allied commanders.'* This probably happened on August 15. But what happened after the attempt failed? Esch continued: 'On his return he found that Field Marshal Model was to relieve him and that he had been ordered to report to the Führer's headquarters.* Esch never saw his father-in-law again. Kluge, fearing arrest on his return to Germany, took cyanide that his son-in-law had given him." (Anthony Cave Brown, "The Invisible Front", page 739ff.)

According to Esch's statement, Hitler's suspicions about Kluge were fully justified and Gersdorff's statement that Kluge had certainly made no attempt to "establish radio contact with the Western Allies" was a mistake.

That, according to Rommel's plan, the two army armored divisions were not only held in reserve for the moment of the coup, triggered by Stauffenberg's assassination attempt on Hitler, we learn from Wilhelm von Schramm, who already reported in 1953 in his book "Der 20. Juli in Paris":

"Hitler did not come to France before the invasion. He did not come in April and he did not come in May, as was expected and as he had repeatedly announced; he postponed his trip from one date to the next . . . Even the high staffs in the West, who did know Hitler, had not expected this.

So the unexpected happened, that it was not possible to act as planned before the invasion. There was no opportunity to arrest Hitler in France, as Rommel had undoubtedly planned . . . But it was not to be. It is quite possible that his demonic 'inner' voice warned Hitler against the planned journey to the West. If in the last years of the war he only very rarely ventured out of the threefold barrier surrounding him, this was of course also due to his advancing illness and the suspicious way in which a man like Bormann now guarded him . . .

Already in the second half of June, the situation on the landing front became increasingly serious. The Commander-in-Chief West, Field Marshal von Rundstedt, sent an urgent appeal to the Führer's headquarters for one of the leading figures to come to the West to discuss the situation. Hitler himself then appeared. He arrived unexpectedly, accompanied only by Jodl, the chief of the Wehrmacht command staff, a few junior officers and a small bodyguard. As the fall of Cherbourg was already imminent, he had decided to travel to the bunker complex near Margival, north of Soisson, on June 17. Rundstedt and Rommel and their chiefs of staff had been ordered to give him a lecture and at the same time to justify the Anglo-Americans landing and quickly expanding their bridgehead into an operational base... The conversation, which the two field marshals had begun with such great expectations, ended in a monologue by Hitler...

Rommel seemed to have another surprising opportunity that day. He had said in

all seriousness that so far no one from the Führer's entourage... or at least behind the front. That was true, as we soon realized. For shortly before the return journey, Lieutenant General Schmundt, Hitler's chief adjutant, suddenly turned to Speidel and said that he wanted to prepare a trip by Hitler to La Roche-Guyon or another suitable place for June 19 and to order front commanders from the various departments and arms divisions to go there.
and arms divisions there. The Führer would then speak to them personally.

One can imagine the satisfaction with which Speidel heard this news and the grim smile with which Rommel received it. Once again there seemed to be a chance for a solution, as the resistance forces had envisioned from the beginning: not an assassination, but an arrest! The fact that Speidel called on Stülpnagel on the return journey via Paris and informed him of the meetings and Hitler's impending journey to the front may also indicate that this opportunity was being seized. It was a pre-alarm for the military commander. Otherwise, the necessary measures were taken immediately. It can be assumed that Hitler would have been Rommel's prisoner on June 19.

But Hitler did not come; neither to the front nor to La Roche-Guyon. When Speidel called Blumentritt the next morning, he was astonished to learn that the Führer had already left WII . . . The cause of Hitler's sudden return to Berchtesgaden was: one of the wing bombs, which were not yet ready for the front and had been moving towards England since June 15, 11:40 p.m. - according to the war diary Ob. West - had suddenly changed direction and had fallen near Margival. There was no damage and no casualties in the bunker town. Nevertheless, Hitler, perhaps urged to do so by those around him, had immediately decided to break off his stay in the West... However, it is possible that he was also motivated by other suspicions, for when his life was threatened, he was known to have the scent of an animal.

With the Führer's sudden return to Berchtesgaden, a great hope was buried. For the time being, it was no longer possible to bring about a political turnaround without violence. . .

So the field marshal went to the front in the next few days with very specific internal intentions. Not only does he want, as always, to see what is going on and encourage the commanders-in-chief and commanders in their military resistance, he now also has compelling reasons to speak to them in private. Despite all the diplomacy that characterizes the "desert fox", he can no longer hide his convictions. He reports on the meeting in Marg i ival and points out that, given the circumstances, independent action in the West could become necessary... Rommel was now in complete agreement with many front commanders...

The great unknown was, of course, still the behavior of the SS units, after the staffs of the I. and II. SS armored corps under the leadership of the commanding generals Sepp Dietrich
and Hausser had already been deployed.... ." (Wilhelm von Schramm, "Der 20. Juli in Paris", page 57ff.)

Speidel confirmed that Rommel and Speidel could rely on the two army armored

divisions mentioned, or more precisely, on their commanders, writing: "Voices were also raised in the troops. The commander of the 116th Panzer Division, Lieutenant General Graf-Schwerin, submitted a memorandum on the military situation and demanded an end to the war and a change in the National Socialist regime on behalf of the troops. His reliable Panzer Division was also in his hands for use against internal enemies. The same applied to the 2nd Panzer Division under Lieutenant General Freiherr von Lüttwitz." (Hans Speidel, "Invasion 1944", page 126.)

When Hofacker returned to Paris from a meeting with Rommel on the evening of July 9, he reported to a co-conspirator in joyful excitement that "Rommel could hardly be stopped, he wanted to strike right away". . .

"Hofacker asked me," said the conspirator Freiherr von Teuchert, "to immediately obtain a draft of a letter from Rommel to the Allied headquarters. It was to inform them of the intention to cease hostilities on his own initiative, to contain no conditions, only a request for honorable treatment after the surrender, and also for secrecy until the possibility of execution had arisen. The letter was completed that very evening - excellently formulated by Bargatzky." (Wilhelm von Schramm, "Der 20. Juli in Paris", page 77 ff.)

The letter was to be brought across the main battle line by a medical officer during a planned exchange of severely wounded soldiers in the American sector. However, the plan failed due to Hitler's mistrust, which had been aroused by an exchange of captured German nurses for American seriously wounded. How this exchange had taken place is described by the American Brown in "The Invisible Front", page 658f., after questioning the conspirator Walter Bargatzky. According to Brown's report, this exchange had taken place through Major Heeren, commander of the 2nd Armored Reconnaissance Division of the 2nd Army Panzer Division under Lieutenant General Freiherr von Lüttwitz, who was just as supportive of the conspiracy as the commander of the 116th Army Panzer Division, General Gerhard von Schwerin.

It is clear from Wilhelm von Schramm's report above that Rommel also kept the two army armored divisions in reserve in order to arrest Hitler in his area as soon as he fell into his trap there.

But even more disastrous for the German war effort than holding back the two armored divisions was the fact that they could be misled into believing that the landing on the Normandy coast was not an actual invasion, but only a pretended one. How was such a deception possible, which led to the OKW not releasing reserves and reinforcements from the neighboring sections in time, because they were certainly expecting the main invasion in the Pas de Calais. The enemy picture already provided enough information on the evening of June to enable the right decisions to be made.

"When the evening report for June 6 was discussed at the 84th Corps, Major Hayn", according to Carell, "explained: 'Three airborne divisions are perfectly there. That is three-quarters of all the parachute units found in England. In addition, there are the US elite formations of the 4th and 1st Divisions. There's no way they're

going to sacrifice their best attack troops over there for the sake of a sham maneuver. 'And here,' he said to Lieutenant Kretschmer, the 0 3 , 'read Major Wiegmann's report from the Caen area. According to the report, the 3rd British and 3rd Canadian divisions had already been established around noon, and now we know that the 50th London and 7th Panzer Divisions are also there. All that's missing is the 51st Highlanders and the 1st Panzer Division, then we'll have Montgomery's entire 8th Army from North Africa on our tail! If that's not the invasion, what's it going to come with?' The question made sense and convinced the staff officers. The Ic of the 7th Army, Lieutenant-Colonel Vorwerk, agreed. 'I completely agree with you,' even the Ic at the OB West von Rundstedt, Lieutenant Colonel Meyer-Detring, concurred. But that was the end of it. Rundstedt himself, especially the OKW and Hitler remained skeptical." (Paul Carell, "They are coming", page 96f.)

Carell also provides a conclusive explanation of how the OKW became convinced of the existence of this Allied ghost army by quoting the Australian Chester Wilmo, who outshone all other Allied war correspondents: "At the fall of Cherbourg, there were 25 British and American divisions in the beachhead. In the United Kingdom 15 divisions were awaiting embarkation for Normandy and 6 were in training as reinforcement depots for the British Army on all fronts. However, German intelligence reported to its command: 'The enemy has deployed27 to 31 divisions and a large number of army troops of all kinds in the beachhead. In England, 67 large units are still available, of which at least 57 can be deployed in a major operation.

The 42 non-existent divisions that German intelligence placed in Eisenhower's reserves were the result of British war cunning and German obtuseness. It was easy for the Allied agents,

It was easy for Allied agents to sell German agents a deployment force that was exaggerated to the point of ridiculousness, as they found willing customers in the intelligence department of the OKH. These foisted divisions clouded the judgment of the German High Command and helped to distort its strategy.

Cherbourg was the first fruit of this distorted German strategy. It was not to remain the only one." (Paul Carell, "They are coming", page 205f.)

It is well known that the intelligence department of the OKH was the willing recipient of the fairy tale of the Allied ghost army, but also all other departments of the OKH, the OKW in the Führer's headquarters and the staffs of the commanders and commanders who, as conspirators following the method of Canaris and Oster, had been misleading the Wehrmacht leadership since the beginning of the war through deliberately false reporting and distorting their strategy. Members of the conspiracy did this without the help of enemy agents.

In the evening hours of June 6, soldiers of the 352nd Infantry Division found a boat in the surf near the mouth of the Vire River with the body of an American officer who had been killed in the fighting in the "Utah" sector of the American bridgehead. Attached to the body by means of a chain was a briefcase containing the

orders of the American VII Corps for "Utah". And in the late afternoon of June 7, troops of the same infantry division found the deployment orders of the American V Corps in the "Omaha" sector on the body of another American officer.

Major General Pemsel of the 7th Army assessed the American deployment orders found as follows: "The wide extension of the American bridgehead - according to the plans up to the inner bay of St. Malo and further eastwards - led to the conclusion that this undertaking required such a large number of American forces that a second landing at another point (Pas de Calais) was completely unlikely." Early in the morning of June 8, the plans were submitted to Rundstedt. "After the war, Blumentritt (Rundstedt's chief of staff, the author) reported to the Americans during interrogation that .(Rundstedt) already had the impression on June 7 that what was happening in Normandy was in fact the invasion1.

Chance had given Rundstedt and Rommel what the Abwehr and SD had been unable to provide them with: a detailed picture of the American operational plans in Normandy. The Germans viewed these plans with suspicion because they had fallen into their hands so easily. Blumentritt said that the documents could have been deliberately lost and could have been a planned deception1. For Rundstedt and Rommel, however, there was no longer the slightest doubt that
doubt that 'Neptune' (code name for the initial phase of the invasion, Overlord1, the author) was a strategic operation and by no means a diversionary maneuver. They now knew exactly where to strike . . (Anthony Cave Brown, "The Invisible Front", page 632f.)

Whether the findings of the American operational plans were used properly by the Germans is, however, a question that cannot be answered in the affirmative in view of the large number of conspirators and sympathizers of the resistance around Stülpnagel, Rommel and Rundstedt.

The reasons why Hitler and Jodl held on to their disastrous assessment of the situation for so long, that they had to reckon with a second, even larger invasion of the enemy in the Pas de Calais, are explained by Brown's revelations, which in the eyes of contemporary historians must be regarded as sensational. It concerns the betrayal and duplicity of the co-conspirator Colonel Baron Alexis von Roenne, group leader of the OKH division "Foreign Armies West", who was sentenced to death after July 20, 1944 and executed on October 12, 1944.

Roenne first came to Hitler's attention through his astute and therefore accurate assessment of the situation when he had to decide to settle the Sudeten question one way or another. Hitler demanded a study on this question, which Roenne was commissioned to prepare. In his report, he came to the conclusion that the Western powers England and France "would mobilize, but would not attack Germany during the advance into Poland". Roenne had seen correctly, and Hitler trusted him. When Roenne predicted in a second assessment of the enemy situation requested by Hitler before the start of the western campaign "that if the German armored divisions crossed the Meuse between Givet and Sedan and attacked the enemy, the French army would collapse", he was right again. "The fact that the French army was

defeated so quickly was", as Liß (Roenne's superior at the time, the author) said, "largely due to Roenne's astute assessment of the situation". The Führer awarded him the German Cross for this.

At the beginning of the Russian campaign, Roenne volunteered for front-line duty in the northern sector, where he hoped to get his family's goods back in Latvia. After being seriously wounded and spending months in hospital, he returned to the Foreign Armies West Division, where he was appointed its chief in the spring of 1943 at Hitler's insistence. "This was a very influential position," says Brown, "because Roenne enjoyed Hitler's full confidence and only he was fully informed about the overall situation. All reconnaissance results about the Western Powers came to his desk at the staff headquarters of the Foreign Armies West Division in Zossen, and Roenne compiled them into the usual weekly and monthly reports for the OKW and Hitler. Only rarely - if ever - did anyone question his credibility or judgment.

Under these circumstances, it seemed as if Roenne's loyalty to Hitler and the Third Reich was above suspicion. In reality, however, he was a convinced co-conspirator of the Black Orchestra. It has never been possible to establish exactly when he embarked on this dangerous path... Roenne had worked very closely with the Abwehr, held Canaris in high esteem and was a good friend of Oster. He and Oster often rode together through the Tiergarten in Berlin, on the grounds of the military training area near Potsdam and in the forests of Brandenburg. Roenne gradually came more and more under the influence of Oster and von Stauffenberg, whom he knew from the War Academy. Roenne had not been given any special tasks in the Black Chapel. He was only supposed to keep the leading men informed about important political and military developments. He remained with the Foreign Armies West Division in a position in which he could provide the Führer with the most important services - or cause him serious harm. His task was to assess the strength of the armed forces of the Western powers mobilized against Germany and to determine the Allies' intentions in Europe in 1944. . .

Since the British had withdrawn to their island after the Dunkirk disaster, it had been practically impossible for the Foreign Armies West Division to determine the strength of the British forces with any certainty. Now that the forces for the invasion were being assembled, it was even more difficult to obtain reasonably accurate estimates of Allied troop strength. Moreover, Roenne was aware of the fact that the Allies were systematically and on a large scale trying to deceive the OKW about their military strength and intentions. As early as the time of Operation 'Starkey' (code name for pretended landing operations before the invasion, author's note), he wrote to Hitler: 'The multitude of at times completely absurd reports about allegedly imminent operations... clearly show the intention to deceive and mislead'. But Roenne and the Foreign Armies West Division had nevertheless allowed themselves to be deceived and misled by operations such as 'Mincemest' and 'Cicero' (code names for deceptive maneuvers to camouflage the landings on Sicily and for deceptive maneuvers in the eastern Mediterranean, the author). Would the Allies

now also succeed in deceiving them with regard to the 'Neptune' operation?

At first it did not appear so, for Roenne reported in his first detailed assessment of the enemy situation in 1944 that he had conclusive
evidence that the Allies would not strike the decisive blow that year in the Balkans, but in France. This report was followed by a second one on February 8, 1944, in which he stated the following:

'An operation outside the eastern Mediterranean is planned for 1944, which is intended to force a decision (in the world war) and which will therefore be carried out with all available forces (from England) . . . This operation is probably being prepared under the code name 'Overlock', and the distribution of the enemy's forces and troop movements clearly indicate that England will be the starting point.

How could Roenne produce such an excellent and dangerous assessment of the situation for the Allies when most of his intelligence sources had fallen into disarray or were controlled by the Allies? This question would not be answered until thirty years later, when the documents revealing the extent to which the Germans had penetrated Allied secrets were released to the public. They show that the omnipresent German radio reconnaissance had obtained the information on which Roenne based his assessment using a wide variety of eavesdropping techniques.

When Allied troops and offensive naval forces were moved from the Mediterranean to England in late December 1943 and early January 1944 in preparation for Operation 'Neptune', the German Y-Dienst (technical intelligence service of the German armed forces, author's note) noted an increase in radio traffic in the British Isles and a decrease in the Mediterranean, although the Allies attempted to disguise this shift in forces by faking radio traffic. The German Y-Dienst also noted the arrival in Britain of the American 82nd Airborne Division, an elite unit that had previously been stationed in Italy. This confirmed Roenne's assumption that England would be the springboard for the invasion

Did Roenne believe that the forces feigned by 'Quicksilver' really existed? Did he believe that the FUSAG (Ghost Army, the author) was gathering in south-east England and that Patton would lead this huge army group against the Pas de Calais? The correct answer to this question was much more complex than the Allies could have suspected. For just as the 'Quicksilver' (British deception maneuver in south-east England, author's note) was about to begin, the dutiful and hitherto absolutely honest Roenne had initiated a deception maneuver of his own, an intrigue that was to have a decisive impact on the outcome of 'Neptune'.

The story began at the end of 1943, when Lieutenant Colonel Roger Michel succeeded Staubwasser as head of Group England. .. Michel was
the son of a South German school teacher and an English mother.

Michel's area of work in the Foreign Armies West Division was England, and he came to Roenne in the spring of 1944 with a perfectly justified complaint. In the course of the constant struggle between the Abwehr and the SD for supremacy in the field of intelligence and to prove to Hitler that the SD had the better intelligence sources, the more intelligent people and a more objective assessment of the situation

than the Army, the SD had cut Michel's estimates of the strength of the enemy forces in half each time. Roenne was convinced that Michel was telling him the truth, but he declared that he could do nothing about the SD's manipulations. According to the regulations in force, all reports from the Foreign Armies West Division had to be passed on via the SD so that it could "confirm their accuracy" and ensure that they corresponded with the information and the SD's assessment of the situation.

In March, as a result of these practices, a difficult situation had arisen because Hitler, believing that the figures on Allied troop strengths, which had been halved by the SD, came from Roenne, whom Hitler trusted, withdrew some divisions from the Western Front. Roenne, for his part, was of the opinion that the Atlantic Wall had to be reinforced. But what could be done? Michel proposed a solution: From now on, Abteilung Fremde Heere West should double its estimate of the number of divisions assembled in Britain. If the SD halved these figures - and this happened almost automatically - then an estimate would arrive on Hitler's desk that roughly corresponded to the facts. Michel's proposal contradicted all the principles that applied to the Foreign Armies West Division and to Roenne personally, but it intrigued him.

Roenne approached his first general staff officer, Colonel Lothar Metz, and discussed the matter with him. Metz categorically refused to take part in such an intrigue and also advised Roenne not to get involved. What would happen, he asked, if the SD took over the estimates and did not halve them? Then no one at the OKW would be able to properly assess the situation in England, unless Roenne admitted what he had done - and this admission could cost him his career and probably his head.

But then Metz was transferred, and now Roenne followed Michel's suggestion. He sent Hitler reports exaggerating the strength of the Allied forces in Britain. That was bad enough, but even worse was what followed. The regulations required that the existence of the divisions mentioned in the estimates of the Foreign Armies West Division be substantiated by facts; but where could such evidence be found?

Michel was not at a loss for an answer. The Foreign Armies West Division was to accept as accurate all press releases and other reports it received about Allied troop strength in England. This information was leaked to the Germans as part of 'Quicksilver', and Roenne knew full well that it could be a deception. But convinced that the SD would halve the numbers he had estimated, he sent a general survey of Allied troop strength in the British Isles to the OKW. His report on the enemy situation went to the SD in May 1944, and the unprecedented happened: as Metz had feared, the SD - probably because the man who had halved the figures so far had been transferred - took over Roenne's exaggerated estimates and passed them on. According to his overview, 85 to 90 Allied divisions, including 7 airborne divisions, were assembled in Britain, and not just 35 (which included 3 airborne divisions) - as in reality. This estimate (of 85 to 90 divisions, the author) was passed on to all the relevant Wehrmacht staffs and entered on their situation maps.

The Allies had thus found an unwilling ally. His overview of the Allied troop strength in England before the day of the landing corresponded in every respect with the deployment plan of 'Quicksilver'. In May, the fictitious FUSAG (ghost army in south-east England, author's note) became a reality for the Führer and the OKW, and Roenne could do nothing to dispel this impression...

Roenne had to pay for this intrigue with his life. But the man who had hatched the idea, Lieutenant Colonel Michel, got away with it. After the war, this gave rise to suspicions in Germany that he had been an agent of the British or American secret service. The suspicion was reinforced when Michel was released from captivity much earlier than all the other general staff officers, turned up in Heidelberg in an American uniform and declared that the C.I.C. (American enemy intelligence service, the author) had recruited him...

Whether Michel was an Allied agent or not is of no particular significance. Nor is there any point in speculating whether Roenne's treachery was motivated by a desire to protect Germany or to overthrow Hitler and the Third Reich. Whatever it may have been, Roenne and Michel together helped to complete the finely spun web with which the Allied intelligence services sought to conceal Operation Neptune, a web into which Hitler also fell and which frustrated all his efforts to repel the invasion." (Anthony Cave Brown, "The Invisible Front", page 467 ff.)

Brown's final comment is his own and understandable for him as an American, because he can and must even be proud of the success of an Allied deception maneuver for which German traitors were very useful. But the American publicist Brown must leave it to us to decide how the betrayal and sabotage of the two conspirators Roenne and Michel should be assessed from our point of view. We thank Brown for his revelations, which mean for us the very sad certainty that we lost the invasion battle solely through the sabotage of German conspirators. Deceived and misled by Roenne, Hitler and the OKW must have expected a second even larger invasion against the Pas de Calais and therefore for many lost days did not use the reserves that were probably available to smash the Allied bridgeheads in Normandy.

However, the fact that, in addition to this appalling betrayal by Roenne, the army armored divisions held back for the conspiracy were withheld from front operations meant that the outcome of the defensive battle was already decided against the German war effort on the first day of the invasion.

Despite this war-deciding betrayal by German conspirators and despite absolute air and sea supremacy, the enemy also had its crisis when the British failed to advance at Caen on July 7 and the Americans at St. L6 on July 9. Paul Carell describes the situation as follows:

"Even Eisenhower was dominated by worry: If the Germans bring their infantry in from the south of France for reinforcements - and they had time to do so now - , there is no telling what will happen. Then the Allies might still be pinned down in their bridgeheads at the onset of winter, without the possibility of large-scale operational movements. Then the weather turns bad and knocks out the bombers, especially the Jabos. But that would take the decisive weapon on the Allied side out of the game. Outmaneuvered by General Wetter!

These were the gloomy thoughts of the Allied staffs. The evil word of the "solidification of the front" was circulating among them. Articles appeared in the American press whose impatience and resentment could not be overlooked.

The German soldiers had no idea of any of this - which is hardly surprising. But the German high command had no idea either - which is even more astonishing. This once again shows the failure of the German intelligence service.

It's hard to believe, but the German high command, right down to the Chief of Staff West, still believed in a second invasion at the Pas de Calais. And they still left powerful divisions there instead of sending them to the struggling front - as Eisenhower worriedly feared. Grotesque!

The Allied High Command could not imagine this behavior and continued to be moved by the great concern that powerful German armored divisions would appear in front of the American front. This countermove would have jeopardized the Allied general staff plan, which envisaged a breakout on the right wing. America's Guderian, General George S. Patton, was already ready for this hour with the newly arrived 3rd US Army. The German high command and the Führer's headquarters made things easy for him: the fact that the victory was nevertheless difficult was the merit of the bravely fighting front troops." (Paul Carell, "They are coming", page 223 f.)

For the Allied High Command, the behavior of the German military leaders was incomprehensible; but it must also have been inconceivable to them that there could be a German general conspiracy that preferred to accept German defeat rather than Hitler's military victory.

Without ties to this conspiracy, without inner conflict, Rommel would have acted differently in the first days of the defensive battle and in the following weeks. There were many focal points of the battle from June 6 to July 20 where the 2nd and 116th Army Panzer Divisions, which had been spared "for political reasons", should have been deployed to reinforce the defence or support counterattacks. And there were "difficult" frontline situations in which a mentally unburdened Rommel would have disobeyed orders from the OKW and OB West regardless of himself, as he repeatedly did in his African campaign. Other commanders-in-chief and commanders have disregarded orders from the Führer before and after, when suddenly arising situations forced them to do so. But perhaps he often deliberately held back so as not to provoke his dismissal as commander-in-chief of Army Group B, because he wanted to carry out his decision to arrest Hitler, as he had assured his co-conspirators.

On the question of whether it was even possible to repel the invasion in view of the enemy's air and sea superiority, the former Grand Admiral Karl Dönitz came to the conclusion "that the invasion would not necessarily have succeeded despite the enemy's air superiority,

if Rommel's and the navy's view that the enemy had to be defeated on the coast as soon as they landed had prevailed as a unified view and the expansion of the defense, deployment of the army units and plan for the course of operations after the landing had been prepared accordingly;

if the army had not committed itself to the assumption that the enemy would land in the Somme area;

if the air force and navy had done more for reconnaissance on the day before the invasion and on the night of its start, since an enemy landing was more likely to be expected during these days because of the tides; and finally

if both the Western High Command and Hitler had immediately regarded the landing in Seine Bay as the main invasion." (Karl Dönitz, "10 Years and 20 Days", page 344 ff.)

To these conditions listed by Dönitz, the last and most important of which could

not have been fulfilled due to the decisive deception and misleading by the conspirator Roenne, the equally decisive condition would have to be added: if actually available reserves had not been held back for the planned overthrow.

If the entire operational tactical planning for the defense against the invasion was already disjointed and disjointed, i.e. not of one piece, the highest military leaders and staffs on the invasion front, who belonged to the hard core of the resistance, lacked the unwavering determination to repel the invasion even under the most adverse circumstances. But this determination had to be lacking because, in all their strategic and tactical considerations and decisions, they were not free from the commitments they had made to each other in pursuit of the jointly decided overthrow.

In his memoirs "Rommel and the Invasion", Admiral Friedrich Rüge, who was commanded as a naval expert on the staff of Army Group B from November 1943 to August 1944, conveys the extent to which Rommel seemed to be burdened internally by his commitment to the conspiracy. Admiral Rüge bases his remarks on almost daily diary entries and writes under 9. 6. 1944:

"At this point it was clear to the staff that the invasion had succeeded, that there was no prospect of pushing in and eliminating the large bridgehead and that, on the contrary, the enemy was constantly reinforcing itself ...

The field marshal also felt the need to discuss the situation and its problems. He liked to do this on short walks in the castle park or in the surrounding area with Speidel and me, or with me alone. He carried a particularly heavy emotional burden during this time, because he felt responsible not only for the military situation in Normandy, but also for the fate of the entire nation. He had predicted that a successful invasion would mean the final loss of the war. Now he sought to clarify the ways and means that might be available to end the war that had become pointless.

He played a difficult dual role, that of the soldier who, using his leadership skills of a soldier who tried to postpone the disaster of the enemy's breakthrough as far as possible, and of a man who felt responsible for the whole and waited for the time to take political action. For this second part of his task, he sought to organize his thoughts and opinions in discussions in the smallest of circles. This mostly took place in theoretical discussions. Speidel did not go into detail about his connections with the groups that prepared July 20, no doubt convinced that it was right to have as few confidants as possible. Speidel had given me a few hints, but without giving me a complete picture of what was planned."

In his diary on July 20, Rüge writes:

"Rommel had discussed many things with me in theory, but had only cautiously hinted at his concrete plans. . .

In my opinion, Rommel was the only man in Germany who was strong enough to turn the situation around, even after it had become clear that Hitler was alive. Rommel alone possessed the name, the energy and the political feeling needed to prevail against the demon Hitler. I believe that he would certainly have mastered the

situation in the West and probably also in the Reich if he had been able to act as commander-in-chief of Army Group B on July 20, 1944. I believe it is possible that his intended offer of an armistice to the Allies would have been successful, despite Roosevelt's demand for unconditional surrender in 1943. The timing was favorable after the heavy losses suffered by the British at Caen, where the failed breakthrough had cost them as much blood as they had counted on for the road to Berlin." (Friedrich Rüge, "Rommel und die Invasion", page 176f. and 225.)

Rommel's ideas were those of many conspirators with whom he shared the total error of judgment of the Western Allies in relation to Stalin. The dispute between them only began when Germany was defeated and they could not agree on the distribution of the spoils.

Nor could the German generals, whether resisting or not, expect the slightest concession in their planned offer of an armistice, because they were no less hated by the enemy than Hitler and the German people.

Rommel's fate was sealed by the fact that - according to research by the English publicist David Irving - he was accused by the arrested and interrogated conspirators Hofacker and Speidel of having belonged to the resistance.

In his publication "Hitler and his commanders", page 65 et seq., Irving reports that the evidence against Rommel from the period before July 20 also originated from Hitler. "Lieutenant Colonel Hofacker had testified in writing before his
Hofacker had testified in writing that Rommel had assured Goerdeler that they could rely on him if the putsch succeeded. Hitler showed Keitel the Hofacker protocol and had Rommel summoned. Rommel refused. According to Hitler's dictates, Keitel now wrote a letter to Rommel in which he advised him to report to the Führer if he felt innocent, or he would have to take the consequences as an officer. Otherwise his arrest was inevitable and with it his responsibility before the People's Court. Lieutenant General Burgdorf - Schmundt's successor as head of the HPA and Hitler's chief adjutant - and his deputy, Lieutenant General Maisei, got into a small, inconspicuous Mercedes 1.7 liter from Schaub's fleet of cars and drove to Ulm to deliver the letter and the Hofacker protocol in person; the freeways were closed to prevent Rommel from escaping . . .

Burgdorf returned to the Wolf's Lair with Rommel's cap and marshal's baton and reported back to Hitler and Keitel. Rommel had asked whether the Führer knew the Hofacker protocol and then asked for time to think about it. Burgdorf had told him to choose poison and not, as usual, the pistol, in order to avoid public speculation about the bullet wounds. The Führer, he said, had promised a state funeral with full military honors in order to preserve Rommel's popular fame. The alternative was a trial, dishonor and execution.

The secret was kept, the promise was kept. Not even Hitler's aides found out. On October 15 or 16, Lieutenant Colonel von Arnsberg began to draft the usual obituary for the Army Ordinance Gazette; only the Führer himself could sign for a field marshal. Arnsberg placed it on Hitler's desk. Several days passed. Then Arnsberg asked whether the wording should perhaps be changed. Hitler bit his lips and then

exclaimed: "I cannot sign this obituary. I'm not lying!"

According to David Irving's investigations, Rommel had also been incriminated by Speidel, as the magazine "Der Spiegel" wrote on January 30, 1977, which revealed the following: "On October 4, 1944, the Speidel case was dealt with by the Court of Honor of the German Wehrmacht, which could expel suspected officers from the Wehrmacht and thus expose them to the People's Court. Irving was able to gather from the records of Lieutenant General Heinrich Kirchheim, who was a member of the Court of Honor, that Speidel was accused of treason against the Führer and the Reich because he had failed to pass on Hofacker's information about the impending assassination attempt to Rommel. In response to this accusation, he then stated in exoneration that "he had indeed dutifully informed the field marshal and that it was not his fault if Rommel had not passed on the warning".

The Speidel sympathizers in the Court of Honour (Generals Kirchheim, Guderian and Kriebel) used this exculpatory plea, which incriminated Rommel all the more, to reject Kaltenbrunner's application for Speidel's expulsion from the Wehrmacht. Their argument: if Speidel said that he had informed Rommel, it was up to the Gestapo to prove him wrong. Speidel was saved (he remained in Gestapo custody), but Rommel's fate was sealed. On October 12, 1944, Hitler ordered the head of the OKW, Keitel, to liquidate Rommel's case - by arrest and trial or by the field marshal's suicide. Rommel preferred suicide."

In the night of July 20-21, the Commander-in-Chief West received a telex from the OKW that General von Stülpnagel was to march to Berlin to report. He left Paris for Berlin that same night, but stopped the car near Verdun to seek suicide. There he had climbed into a canal and shot at himself in order to drown if the shot was unsuccessful. The men accompanying him pulled him out of the canal and took him to a military hospital. Stülpnagel had shot out one eye and injured the other so badly that he also lost it through surgery. After about fourteen days in a military hospital, he was transferred to Berlin, where he was later sentenced to death by the People's Court and executed.

It was the dramatic aftermath of the invasion battle, which was lost through deliberate sabotage and cleared the way to the Rhine, just as part of the conspiracy had decided from the beginning.

The sabotage of the conspiracy on the eastern front

After July 20, 1944, the Social Democrat Wilhelm Leuschner, designated by the conspiracy as Vice-Chancellor under Goerdeler's chancellorship, made the following statement to the People's Court:

In 1943, the former Chief of the General Staff and military head of the conspiracy, Ludwig Beck, had told him during a second consultation, when asked whether and for what time the putsch was intended, "that such a putsch was no longer necessary, because one now had enough trusted men in command i the Eastern Front that one could regulate the war until the collapse of the regime. These confidants

For example, these confidants arranged for their units to withdraw without informing the neighboring units, so that the Soviets could break into the resulting gap and roll up the front on both sides. These neighboring units were therefore also forced to retreat or were taken prisoner.

According to other findings, there were considerable misdirections of supplies, especially of ammunition and fuel." (Friedrich Lenz, "Stalingrad - Der verlorene Sieg", page 181.)

It could not have been difficult to place conspirators and confidants in high command positions in the army units, as the deployment and transfer of officers was favored by offices and departments of the OKH or OKW, some of whose leaders had already been part of the conspiracy at the beginning of the war. In addition, it was well known that a strict esprit de corps prevailed in the active officer corps, which obliged everyone to help each other in all situations. This unwritten law applied in particular to the members of the Grand General Staff. Most of the conspirators also knew each other from the cadet schools or war academies they had attended together.

The Chief of the Personnel Office, General Schmundt, speaks from experience he had to make with members of the active officer corps when he explains: "They stick together like pitch and brimstone, they sabotage the Führer's orders wherever they can, of course always in such a way that nothing can be proven against them, they constantly throw sand in the machine of our Wehrmacht. One of them covers for the other. Officers who do not belong to their circle, they try to put out of action. For example, Seydlitz managed to keep General Lieb, who has now earned the Oak Leaves in the Cherkassy Campaign and who has proven to be a particularly capable troop leader, in the post of Frankfurt city commander until recently. But they simply cannot be dealt with." (Friedrich Lenz, "Stalingrad - Der verlorene Sieg", page 182.)

So it could not have been difficult for the leading head of the conspiracy in the central section of the Eastern Front, Major General Henning von Tresckow, to have his cousin Fabian von Schlabrendorff, first lieutenant in the reserve, transferred to his staff as an orderly officer at the beginning of 1941, where he himself had become the first general staff officer of the army group. According to Schlabrendorff, their daily collaboration was "based on the one idea of leaving no means untried to overthrow Hitler and his system". (Fabian von Schlabrendorff, "Officers against Hitler", page 43.)

Schlabrendorff characterizes von Tresckow as a man with the special gift of imprinting his spirit on his environment. Assuming that the first prerequisite for a successful strike against Hitler

Tresckow endeavored "to place officers with a decent attitude, anti-socialist views and decisiveness in key positions within his sphere of influence". Only this would create the conditions for action.

It must therefore have been easy for von Tresckow as a superior to recruit the following members of his staff for active resistance: Colonel Bernd von Kleist, Colonel Schultze-Büttger, Lieutenant Colonel Alexander von Voß, Major Ulrich von Oertzen, Captain Eggert, General Freiherr Rudolf von Gersdorff and Lieutenant Colonel Hans Albrecht von Boddien.

The two like-minded Counts Hans von Hardenberg and Heinrich von Lehndorff were assigned as adjutants to Field Marshal von Bock, who was commander-in-chief of Army Group Center at the beginning of the Russian campaign, with the task of influencing him in the interests of the conspiracy, but they were unsuccessful. Tresckow then tried to influence his cousin von Bock himself when the German army suffered the first setbacks in the battle for Moscow and the conspiracy believed to be seeing the first signs of the longed-for defeat. But Bock did not allow Tresckow to speak and, running out of the room and trembling with rage, shouted: "I will not tolerate the Führer being attacked. I will stand before the Führer and defend him against anyone who dares to attack him!"

Instead of doing his military service, Schlabrendorff worked diligently to maintain contact with the resistance circle in the home army, which he did by flying from Russia to Berlin. He informed the "manager" of the conspiracy, Major General Oster, about the military situation in Russia and the psychological situation in the frontline army, while Oster informed him about the home country and the political situation in the world. Of course, the State Secretary of the Foreign Office, Freiherr von Weizsäcker, was also frequently visited in order to receive political information from the State Secretary after "an unvarnished presentation of the military situation".

"In addition, I maintained contact with our Swedish intermediary living in Berlin, through whom we were in contact with England." (Fabian von Schlabrendorff, "Officers against Hitler", page 52ff.)

General Georg Thomas, head of the Wehrwirtschafts- und Rüstungsamt and a resister since 1938, supported the plans of the conspiracy and visited two army groups on the Eastern Front in the late summer of 1941, where he explained to the two chiefs of staff, von Sodenstern and von Greifenberg, that an early end to the war was absolutely necessary. Both generals were reportedly not without sympathy for General Thomas's arguments, but remained without influence on their commanders-in-chief.

commander-in-chief. The Quartermaster General of the Army, General Eduard Wagner, and the Chief of the General Army Office, General Friedrich Olbricht, also did their bit for the resistance.

Quite naturally, the disintegration of Tresckow's staff by the conspiracy in the departments and groups of the above-mentioned supporters continued downwards. Thus von Gersdorff reveals in his memoirs "Soldat im Untergang" (Soldier in

Downfall), page 82ff., that when he took up his post under Tresckow, he found in his deputy (0-3) of Abteilung Ic/AO, "Major der Reserve Schach von Wittenau, an extremely clever and distinguished man". "Very soon we realized that we were in complete agreement in our basic views, but above all in our political views. He rejected Hitler and National Socialism with the same consistency as I did, so that there was no need to exercise any caution. When he had to leave the front in 1942 due to progressive angina pectoris, I was fortunate to find in his successor, Major der Res. Andreas Freiherr Knigge, a colleague with whom I shared the same basic political and general views."

Among the other officers, Gersdorff noticed another orderly officer (0-6), Lieutenant of the Reserve Conrad, who became one of his most valuable colleagues. A counterintelligence group of the Amt Ausland/Abwehr was attached to and subordinate to Department Ic/AO, which was divided into three departments: intelligence gathering, sabotage and counterintelligence. "I had already got to know the great 'gray eminence', Admiral Canaris," Gersdorff continues, "during the Polish campaign. In keeping with his character, a mutual sympathy had developed between us without many words, which lasted until his tragic end. He always showed complete trust in me and expected absolute openness from me. The same applied to his closest colleague, Colonel Hans Oster.

Including the aviation liaison officer (Flivo), the interpreters, the troop support officers and so on, Department Ic/AO comprised about thirty officers and special leaders, so that for the first time I was assigned to a large 'office' board, which combined very different areas of work."

As in the above example, the other divisions of Army Group Center were also contaminated by the spirit of resistance, a condition that naturally had to have a devastating effect on the front troops of Army Group Center, which, as is well known, suddenly ceased to exist in the second half of 1944. The miserable failure of the staffs of Army Group Center was already evident in the late autumn of 1941, when the advance on Moscow was halted by the Russian winter. Guderian reports in his memoirs: "The movements of the troops were
Although the troops' movements were made easier by the frost that set in on the night of November 3rd to 4th, this was offset by the frostbite from which the troops began to suffer ... .

"On November 6, I flew to the front, my impressions of this flight were expressed in the following letter: 'For the troops it is a torture and for the cause a great pity; for the enemy is gaining time and we are getting deeper and deeper into the winter with our plans... The unique opportunity to strike a really big blow is disappearing more and more, and I don't know whether it will ever return.... .

On the morning of November 14, I visited the 167th ID and spoke with a number of officers and soldiers. The supplies for the troops were poor. There was a lack of snow shirts, boot grease, underwear and, above all, cloth pants. A large proportion of the men were walking in drill pants, and that in 22 degree temperatures! Stockings and boots were also urgently needed. At lunchtime at the 112th ID, the

picture was the same. Our men had acquired Russian coats and fur hats and could only be recognized as German soldiers by their insignia. Whatever clothing supplies the Panzer Army still had were immediately sent to the front. However, this was only a drop in the ocean.

Eberbach still had around 50 tanks in his proud brigade. The number of tanks in three divisions should have been 600. The icy conditions caused great difficulties, as the chain tunnels had not yet arrived. The cold caused the optics to fog up; the ointment to prevent this had not arrived either. Starting the tank engines had to be made easier by lighting fires under the hulls. Some of the fuel froze and the oil became thick. This troop also lacked the protective clothing and glysantin." (Heinz Guderian, "Erinnerungen eines Soldaten", page 2 1 2,222f. and 225.)

"The icy cold, the miserable shelters, the inadequate clothing, the high losses of men and material, the pitiful fuel supplies make warfare a torture, and the longer I go on the more I am depressed by the tremendous burden of responsibility which, despite all the fine words, no one can relieve me of.

. . . now, if the combat situation permits, I want to go to Army Group (Center, the author) on Sunday to give a talk on the organization of the near future, about which nothing has yet been announced. I don't know what people think about that, nor do I know how we should be back in order by next spring. . ." (Heinz Guderian, "Erinnerungen eines Soldaten", page 228.)

How the general staff of Army Group Center, who were responsible for all the supplies and who were for the most part part part of the conspiracy, thought of everything.

Guderian could not have known when he wrote his memoirs. These gentlemen had not been on good terms with the senior troop leaders for a long time, because they had repeatedly closed their minds to their plans for overthrow; now they were to see how they coped with their difficulties at the front, and after all, as the hard core of the conspiracy, they had wished for setbacks and defeats, as they openly declared.

On December 20, 1941, Guderian flew to Rastenburg, where he was received by Hitler in the presence of Keitel, Schmundt and several other officers. After discussing questions about the operational situation, Hitler and Guderian had the following argument about the more than inadequate supply of the troops:

"I (Guderian, the author): .of course it is my duty to alleviate the suffering of my soldiers as best I can. This is difficult because the men still have no winter clothing and most of the infantry are walking around in drill pants. Boots, underwear, gloves and headgear are either missing altogether or are in dismal condition/

Hitler roared: 'That's not true. The Quartermaster General has informed me that the winter clothing has been allocated/

Me: 'Of course it has been allocated, but it hasn't arrived. I'm following its route closely. It is now at the station in Warsaw and has been stuck there for weeks due to a lack of locomotives and congestion on the lines. Our requests in September and October were brusquely rejected, and now it is too late.

The Quartermaster General (conspirator Wagner, the author) was called in and

had to confirm my account. Goebbels' clothing campaign at Christmas 1941 was the result of this discussion. Its result did not reach the soldiers in the winter of 1941/42." (Heinz Guderian, "Erinnerungen eines Soldaten", page 242.)

If Tresckow and his ilk had thought about supplies for the front troops instead of the coup plans, they would certainly have found ways and means, with the help of their friends in the OKH and OKW, to at least supply the fighting troops with winter clothing, be it through special operations with motor vehicle columns or with air transports; for according to Guderian's report, page 242, the abnormal Russian cold caused twice as many casualties through frostbite as through enemy fire.

Sabotage can also be achieved by doing nothing, by letting things run their course. These omissions were just as much sabotage of the war effort as the permanent preoccupation with plans for overthrow and assassination.

Field Marshal Günther von Kluge, Commander-in-Chief of Army Group Center on the Eastern Front, then Commander-in-Chief West, was positively disposed towards the conspiracy, but did not allow an assassination attempt on Hitler in the area of his army group. During the invasion, he unsuccessfully sought contact with the Americans in order to surrender. He was relieved of his supreme command by Hitler and ordered to take responsibility. He then chose suicide by poison.

Although the commander-in-chief of the army, von Brauchitsch, and his chief of staff, Haider, were also convinced that they had crushed the Red Army in the first major battles of annihilation, we lost the battle for Moscow. This was possible because our front was not only exposed to the Siberian cold of the Russian winter as a result of criminal negligence and sabotage of supplies, but was also to become the victim of the great traitor Dr. Richard Sorge. This Richard Sorge worked as a press attaché at the German embassy in Tokyo and was an intimate friend of the German ambassador, Major General Eugen Ott, whose friends were the conspirators State Secretary von Weizsäcker in the Foreign Office and Erich Kordt. Thanks to his good relations, including with government circles in friendly Japan, Sorge was able to inform Stalin in good time that the Japanese would not attack in the Far East. This enabled Stalin to deploy the well-equipped divisions of his Far East Army against the exhausted, half-frozen German army in front of Moscow and repel it. Erich Kern describes the details of this momentous betrayal in detail in his documentary "Betrayal of Germany" and "How Germany was betrayed".

In his book "The Tragedy of the German Air Force", David Irving reports that the Luftwaffe's supply situation in the winter of 1941/42 was much better than that of the army: "Milch's (Milch was Field Marshal and Inspector General of the Luftwaffe, the author) own efforts in March 1941 had spared the Luftwaffe the worst - airmen and ground personnel were at least sufficiently clothed for the Russian winter. But like the army, the Luftwaffe had also been struck by a catastrophe: only 15 percent of the 100,000 Luftwaffe vehicles in the east were still functioning at the beginning of January 1942. The cold start procedure for aircraft and motor vehicles invented by Luftwaffe engineers had not caught on, as the army, SS and also the Luftwaffe had all ignored this simple procedure for combustion engines (oil dilution with a little gasoline), although the Luftwaffe itself had demonstrated it to Hitler in Rechlin in 1939.

Since the Rechlin demonstration, the Army had been informed twice about the cold start procedure, but had repeatedly rejected it until November 10, and only then was this method approved by the OKH and OKW. When he heard of this belated order, Milch exploded: 'If an order goes out from an authority beyond the start of winter on November 10, it takes eight weeks to get around in Germany. Now imagine that on the eastern front!"

Unfortunately, as he now learned, the Luftwaffe had based its vehicle regulations on those of the army. "If our people
want to rely on the army, then I can feel sorry for them," Milch said bitterly. He ordered an investigation and learned that the Quartermaster General had only published his own "Instruction Sheet for the Operation of Motor Vehicles in Winter" on October 10, 1941, and that the subsequent publication "Motor Vehicles in Winter" had been issued a month later.

Supplements on special measures followed in January and February 1942.

The army's losses of weapons and equipment on the eastern front in winter were immense." (David Irving, "The Tragedy of the German Air Force", page 212.) i

In the spring of 1942, complete chaos threatened to break out in the transportation system. The OKW had simply had tens of thousands of coal wagons converted into low-loaders for the transportation of guns and vehicles to the front, as not a single one of the actual low-loaders had been sent back; "Hundreds of locomotives had been damaged in the W1nt I er because no precautions had been taken for the extreme cold. When the wagons were unloaded, no one bothered to send them back. As a result, more than 150,000 wagons were now clogging up the lines behind the eastern front and new, fully loaded freight trains could not make any progress... In Germany, the crippling coal shortage threatened to bring the armaments factories to a standstill: At least 70,000 coal wagons a day were needed to maintain capacity. In a few weeks, important large factories would grind to a halt.

The only solution that General Gehrke, the OKW's head of transportation, could offer was to tip the wagons and their loads off the rails to clear the tracks and send the locomotives back to Germany in convoy. This could not be very useful either for Germany or for the fighting front.

In this threatening situation, Hitler remembered the two men who had already mastered similar situations. Speer, who had developed and produced a heavy anti-tank gun in just a few weeks, while the Army Ordnance Office (under the direction of the conspirator Thomas, the author) had taken months to do so, and Milch, who had saved the day in southern Norway in 1940 and saved the Luftwaffe from ruin . . . Hitler had them both come to him, together with a young railroad executive whom Speer had named to him, and gave them a long lecture on the necessity of overcoming the transport catastrophe.... . In order to achieve all this, he said, he would dismiss Kleiinmann as State Secretary and replace him with Dr. Ganzenmüller; Speer and Milch were to be given dictatorial powers over the entire Reich transport system...

The war must not be lost because of the transportation issue. It must therefore be solved.1 Milch and Speer solved it in a few weeks. . . After a conversation with Dr. Ganzenmüller and Speer, Milch announced to his staff: "So far they have argued about 400 wagons; yesterday we ordered 50,000 wagons.1" (David Irving, "The Tragedy of the German Air Force", page 226.)

A diary entry by Goebbels reads: "The Führer has awarded Dorpmüller and Ganzenmüller the Knight's Cross of the War Merit Cross - Dorpmüller for his failure, Ganzenmüller for his extraordinary achievements, which at certain times were directly decisive for the war. "

When the OKW ordered further numerous call-ups to the army in October 1942, Milch said to Irving: "I believe that not 20 percent of the infantry are at the front yet, 80 percent are somewhere in the rear."

On another occasion, Milch guaranteed: "If my hand were released, I would free a million German soldiers who could all go to the front. I would also be prepared to give 500,000 men to industry as workers . . . " (David Irving, "The Tragedy of the German Air Force", page 247.)

On November 8, 1943, Hitler finally admitted that there was a disproportion in the distribution of army personnel between the fighting troops and the echelons. He ordered the OKW to investigate the actual situation and invited Admiral Dönitz and Göring to Rastenburg on November 24 to discuss ways of reinforcing the army's fighting troops.

The day before this meeting, Göring asked Milch to inform him of the details. Milch repeated his assertion that of the 8.3 million men in the army, less than two million were actually on the front: 'On the eastern front1, he said, there are 260000 infantry1. If only he were given a free hand, he could find two million soldiers and send them to the front units." (David Irving, "The Tragedy of the German Air Force", page 332f.)

Three days after the meeting with Dönitz and Göring, Hitler signed a Führer order that at least one million men were to be collected from the Wehrmacht's own ranks and sent to the front. But the practical result, registered by Hitler's chief adjutant Schmundt several months later, was a disappointment: "The great success", Schmundt said, "unfortunately did not materialize. Bureaucratic procedures initially delayed the execution and then it was not enforced as rigorously as it should have been. No use was made of the penal provisions issued by the Führer." In December, only 20000 men were added to the eastern front.

men, which was just under 10 percent of their losses in killed, wounded and missing. (Anthony Cave Brown, "The Invisible Front", page 54 lf.)

Anyone wishing to investigate the true reasons for the failure of this Wehrmacht command capture operation should by no means overlook the fact that the conspirator Count Stauffenberg was Chief of Staff to the Commander of the Reserve Army, Colonel General Fromm, under whose authority he was able to act as he saw fit. There is no doubt that Stauffenberg's influential position meant that the interests of the conspiracy were given preferential treatment.

On September 7, 1942, Milch Hitler reported on the work of Central Planning at the Führer's headquarters in Vinnitsa, where he did not fail to chalk up a few unpleasant truths to the sleepyheads or saboteurs in the OKW and OKH. "He complained that huge sums were being spent on armaments and that almost 40 percent of the money was being wasted."

Back in Berlin, he said angrily to his staff: "These people don't care whether it's impossible to buy a glass or a saucepan (he meant the OKW, the

author). They are quite happy for thousands of families to have to cook in tin cans. But they themselves have to have everything: ten million razors are produced for the Wehrmacht every year and twenty to thirty million toothbrushes! All in all, we only have half as many soldiers! Twenty to thirty million combs, the same number of hairbrushes and so on. But do you believe that the population can buy combs or hairbrushes today? The Wehrmacht alone cannot win the war, only the entire German people can. . . When the (responsible officers of the OKW) get their orders from the Führer, they don't carry them out, but do what suits them. And the result is this mess. That is the latest news I can report to you from the Führer's headquarters." (David Irving, "The Tragedy of the German Air Force", page 238.)

The former supply officer Oskar Brendel told the author how the supply of motor vehicles, which failed en masse due to the muddy periods, the Russian winter and generally poor road conditions in Russia, was made difficult to a great extent by cleverly targeted sabotage.

In July 1942, Oskar Brendel had been assigned the task of reconciling the production volume of the domestic automotive industry with the spare parts requirements of the Eastern Front by the OKH, Abt. An inspection of the central spare parts stores (ZEL) carried out by him revealed that of the pistons, which were among the most important spare parts, almost exclusively the
size 0 were kept in stock, while mainly the oversizes 2 and 3 were used for the front repair of motor vehicles. Size 0, on the other hand, could only be fitted in the new vehicles of the domestic supply plants, where it was missing because it was in the spare parts stores behind the front.

This deliberate misallocation meant that a large proportion of the size 0 pistons were diverted from production to the ZEL, resulting in a considerable delay in the delivery of new motor vehicles, while the pistons that could not be used were stored outside in the ZEL and the front repair of the motor vehicles was delayed for weeks, often months, in the army vehicle parks (each army group had at least one such park with a repair workshop) because the required size 2 and 3 pistons could not be obtained. As a result, not only did the front lack the trucks that were particularly important, but the vehicles still in service were overused, causing further damage.

The reporter literally described this as "sophisticated and deliberate sabotage" and added: "On the basis of my report, the responsible officer was merely accused of incorrect planning. The Bendlerstrasse (office of the OKH, the author) covered for him." (Oskar Brendel, report dated January 12, 1972 to the author.)

In November 1941, General Field Marshal von Kluge took over the supreme command of Army Group Center in place of Bock, a change that suited the conspirators because Kluge was more approachable in terms of the conspiracy than Bock. Nevertheless, as his cousin Schlabrendorff reports,

Tresckow had to fight a tough and protracted battle to win him over to the conspiracy. "Anyone who has seen at close quarters the skill and intensity with which Tresckow fought for Kluge can understand the severity of the two and a half year struggle. (Fabian v. Schlabrendorff, "Officers against Hitler", page 61.)

It was this battle that occupied their thoughts and aspirations for years, while there was still a battle at the front, which - according to their ideas - had to be fought in order to ward off Bolshevism, but which should lead to German defeat in order to get rid of Hitler. The fact that von Kluge tolerated the defeatist activities of the high and national traitors in his staff for months and years, which certainly became more and more visible to him, is his share of this heavy guilt. He must have known that no war can be won with traitorous staff officers and should not have allowed these disruptive forces to emerge in the first place. All the more devastating must have been the fact that he himself became involved in the machinations of the resistance.

Von Gersdorff reveals how he himself helped to win Kluge over: "One evening Tresckow and I went for a walk with him. Tresckow again tried to convince him of the need to act. Kluge replied with weak counter-arguments, even though in principle he agreed with Tresckow's line of thought. Suddenly Tresckow said: 'Mr. Feidmarschall, walking next to you is someone who not so long ago carried out an assassination attempt against Hitler.' Kluge stopped with a jerk, grabbed my arm and said excitedly: "Gersdorff, for God's sake, what have you done?" I replied: "The only thing left to do in the present situation." Kluge then walked a few steps further, spread his arms out somewhat theatrically and said: "Children, you've got me!"

In the period that followed, Kluge actually did everything Tresckow told him to do: he contacted Beck, Goerdeler and other leaders of the resistance and even tried to persuade other senior military leaders to take action. Nevertheless, we soon gained the impression that he could never completely escape Hitler's influence and that he was not only very skeptical about the coup plans and, above all, the assassination preparations, but that he was also completely opposed to them. Nevertheless, Tresckow succeeded in persuading Kluge to send the Ia/op of Army Group Center, Lieutenant-Colonel v. Voss, to Field Marshal von Rundstedt in Paris and me to the Commander-in-Chief of Army Group South, Field Marshal v. Manstein. Tresckow had succeeded much earlier, through the mediation of Schmundt (with whom he had been friends in the past, the author), in having our former Ia/op, Colonel i. G. Schulze-Büttger, transferred to Manstein's staff in order to be able to influence him in our favor and to take advantage of any opportunities that might arise in Army Group South for an assassination attempt. But Schulze-Büttger had repeatedly told me that he was getting nowhere with Manstein.

Before I flew off to the headquarters of Army Group South in Zaporozhe,

Kluge told me: "Tell Field Marshal v. Manstein that I would ask him to take over the position of Chief of the General Staff of the Wehrmacht - that is, the combined general staffs of the army, air force and navy - after a coup d'état." He added explicitly that he, Kluge, was prepared to report to the younger Manstein in this case. Tresckow gave me letters from Goerdeler and Popitz, in which both implored the generals to act. Tresckow instructed me, however, to show these letters to Manstein only if I was sure that he would not make use of them. Tresckow also ordered me not to say a word in the presence of the Chief of the General Staff of Army Group South, General Busse.

After arriving in Zaporozhe, I first spoke to Schulze-Büttger and another confidant of Tresckow, Manstein's orderly officer, Lieutenant Alexander Stahlberg. Neither of them gave me much hope of being able to influence the field marshal in our favor. They then arranged for a conversation with Manstein in private. Its beginning and its most important phases unfolded as follows:

Manstein: 'You kottimen of Army Group Center. I'll ask my boss to join me."

Me: "In the presence of General Busse, I will only be able to give Mr. Field Marshal a lecture on the military situation in Army Group Centre. But then I wouldn't be able to say a word about my actual mission.1

I began with an area that I could expect to break down open doors with Manstein, namely the top organization of the military leadership, which was the subject of much discussion among all staffs at the time. I explained that Field Marshal v. Kluge was extremely concerned about this and about the continuation of the war in general. In view of the conflict between the OKW and OKH and Hitler's increasingly dilettantish style of leadership, the collapse of the Eastern Front was only a matter of time. It had to be made clear to Hitler that he was heading for disaster.

Manstein: 'I am completely of the same opinion. But I am the wrong man to say this to Hitler. The enemy propaganda has made me, through no fault of my own, into the man who supposedly wants to challenge Hitler for power. He is now only suspicious of me. Only Rundstedt and Kluge can take on such a mission.1

Me: "Perhaps all the field marshals should go to the Führer together and put a pistol to his chest."

Manstein: "Prussian field marshals do not mutiny!"1

Me: "Prussian history is replete with examples of high-ranking generals acting against the will and orders of their king. I only recall Seydlitz and Yorck. Incidentally, Prussian field marshals have never been in a situation that could be compared with the one we are in today. Such a unique situation requires the use of unprecedented means. But we also no longer believe that a joint action by the field marshals would have any chance of success. In Army

Group Center we have long been convinced that every means must now be taken to save Germany from a catastrophe."

Manstein: 'You want to kill him, do you?"

Me: Yes, Mr. Field Marshal, and like a mad dog."

Manstein jumped up, ran excitedly around the room and shouted: "I won't go along with that. It would ruin the army.4

I said, 'Mr. Field Marshal, you admitted earlier that Germany will perish unless something happens. Not the army, but Germany and the German people are the primary concern.4

Manstein: 'I am first and foremost a soldier. You don't know the front like I do. I talk to old and young soldiers every day, especially young officers. I see the enthusiasm in their eyes when they talk about the Führer4 . They would never understand an action against him. Something like that would certainly lead to civil war within the army.4

Me: 'I too am often at the front and talk to young officers. I admit that the majority are still enthusiastic about Hitler. But I also know many who have a completely different view. Above all, however, I am convinced that the officer corps and the troops would stand behind their military leaders in absolute obedience and carry out every order given to them. Probably no one would speak of Hitler again a short time after his disappearance.4

I had certainly gone too far with that last assertion, which I blurted out excitedly. In any case, Manstein vigorously disagreed. He remained firm in his opinion and declared that he would never take part in an undertaking that would lead to the downfall of the army. Manstein could have had me arrested long ago; I had spoken too openly about the need to eliminate Hitler. So I left the letters from Goerdeler and Popitz in my pocket. In view of Manstein's rigid attitude, it seemed too risky for me to put the lives of these men in his hands.

When, after further discussions, I was forced to realize the futility of my efforts, I recalled the self-serving4 assignment that Field Marshal v. Kluge had given me.

I: 'Field Marshal v. Kluge has instructed me to ask you whether you would be prepared to make yourself available as Chief of the General Staff of the Wehrmacht after a successful coup d'état?4

Manstein made a slight bow and said: "Order Field Marshal v. Kluge, I thank him for the trust he has placed in me. Field Marshal v. Manstein will always be loyally at the disposal of the legal state leadership.4

That was the end of the discussion. Until my plane took off, I still had to expect to be arrested. According to the laws of war, the Field Marshal would have been perfectly entitled to sentence me to death in summary proceedings and have me shot immediately. The fact that he remained silent even after July 20 is one of the reasons for my survival.

my survival. Despite my disappointment, I will never forget this. On the other hand, his attitude was symptomatic of the majority of senior generals.

Manstein's attitude illustrated the serious failings that had been committed by the highest military leaders. Even then, Tres- ckow had nothing but contempt for the high generals." (Rudolf Christoph v. Gersdorff, "Soldat im Untergang", page 133ff.)

The confrontation between Manstein and Gersdorff illustrates the irreconcilable conflict between the soldierly leader with a clear view of reality and the irresponsible conspirator plagued by illusions.

Despite his firm rejection of the conspiracy, Hitler did not have unreserved confidence in Manstein. According to Brown's report, "The Invisible Front", page 546, Hitler made the remark during a briefing "that Manstein could not feel disadvantaged with regard to the reinforcement of his army group after he had sent him five excellent armored divisions and three infantry divisions. His strength ratio is still better than anywhere else on the front. The fact that his troops are in part very demoralized is due to the spirit they are receiving from above. "Hitler claimed to have learned from the party and in particular from Gauleiter Koch, the Reichskommissar Ukraine, that defeatism was spreading in Manstein's headquarters."

In Army Group Center, the front around Tresckow had been reinforced by several younger officers. According to Gersdorff's report, his brother Georg v. Boeselager had been transferred to Kluge's staff alongside the ordinance officer Philipp v. Boeselager. He came with the proposal to gather the cavalry squadrons of the divisional reconnaissance divisions behind the front and form a powerful cavalry unit "for special tasks". "As Tresckow and Boeselager had completely identical political and military views, it soon became clear to us what they had in mind. The aim was to create a force that was reliable in every respect in terms of the conspiracy. During the formation and training of the "Regiment Boeselager" I visited the unit several times; in a relatively short time Georg Boeselager had succeeded in welding officers, non-commissioned officers and men together in such a way that this troop was fully reliable and available for any kind of deployment. For ever-changing reasons, the unit was never used for political purposes. On one occasion, Hitler never returned to Army Group Center after March 1943, but then Kluge refused a coup d'état in the area of his headquarters." (Rudolf-Christoph v. Gersdorff, "Soldat im Untergang", page 125 f.)

This deployment of the "Boeselager Regiment" for the purposes of conspiracy was consummate sabotage on the Eastern Front, just as it was later used in front-line operations. Especially in the rear area of Army Group Center, the Russian banditry hindered supplies for the front to such an alarming extent that the use of the smaller cavalry squadrons to fight the gangs would have been as urgent as it was effective.

In 1942, Tresckow was able to persuade Kluge to agree to Dr. Goerdeler, the civilian head of the resistance, being asked to meet with the field marshal at his headquarters in Smolensk. Schlabrendorff delivered the invitation to

this visit, and Goerdeler accepted. As usual, his friends in the OKW, Canaris and Oster, provided the necessary credentials. Goerdeler allegedly found a willing ear in Kluge, as Tresckow had prepared his commander-in-chief accordingly.

After this success, Schlabrendorff saw it as his task to bring Tresckow together with Beck as well. Around the same time, he met General Olbricht, the head of the General Army Office under the commander of the Reserve Army, who was prepared to use his official powers within the Reserve Army to overthrow Hitler. These military leaders of the Reserve Army, such as Olbricht and Stauffenberg, must be kept in mind when asking about the devastating lack of replacements for the front'

An agreement was reached between Goerdeler, Olbricht and Tresckow, with the result that Olbricht undertook to make military preparations in Berlin, Vienna, Cologne and Munich to wrest power from National Socialism as soon as the first blow had been struck against Hitler. All the threads came together in the hands of Major General Oster. He presented the most important questions to Colonel General Beck and received the decisions from him. According to Schlabrendorff's report, Olbricht and Oster were the two conspirators who had considered and laid the first serious plans for the seizure of power within the Reich. At the last meeting between Olbricht and Tires ! ckow in 1942, Olbricht had asked for another eight weeks to prepare the plan for the occupation of Berlin, Cologne, Munich and Vienna in collaboration with Oster.

Once again, a meeting took place between the conspirators of the Berlin group and those on the eastern front, which was set for Smolensk. To disguise this meeting, Canaris organized an official flight from Berlin to Smolensk and appeared with many members of his office at a large meeting of counterintelligence officers.

The decisive conversation, however, took place in a small room to which von Tresckow

which von Tresckow, von Dohnanyi and von Schlabrendorff were present. Tresckow informed his Berlin friends of his intention to assassinate Hitler in the near future, while Dohnanyi reported on the preparations for the coup in Berlin. After establishing a code for mutual understanding, they parted again to end the late evening with a drink together in a large circle.

Tresckow's assassination plan was to induce Hitler to visit the headquarters of Army Group Center, which was located in a forest camp near Smolensk. Thanks to his acquaintance with Hitler's chief adjutant Schmundt, the visit was promised for the first few days of March 1943 and, after several cancellations and promises, was finally set for March 13.

Since Kluge rejected an assassination attempt on Hitler in the area of his headquarters by deploying the Boeselager cavalry regiment, Tresckow and Schla- brendorff decided to carry out an assassination attempt against the will

of their commander-in-chief, in the expectation that Kluge would join in once the attack had been carried out. The plan was made not to shoot Hitler, but to destroy him in his plane by means of a smuggled-in bomb, thus faking a plane crash and avoiding the psychological disadvantages of an assassination attempt. So, as always, this time too it was not going to be possible without deception and lies.

v. Gersdorff discreetly procured English explosives. English explosives and detonators had the advantage over German ones that the detonation was completely silent and could be set to the desired time of explosion. In order to be absolutely sure of the effect of the explosion, two explosive devices were used and transformed into a package for camouflage, the shape of which resembled two cognac bottles. The package also had to be sealed in such a way that the detonator could be set off without damaging the packaging.

Hitler and his escort arrived in two planes and landed at Smolensk airport, where he was met by Kluge and Tresckow. The meeting with Hitler took place in Field Marshal General von Kluge's room and was attended by the army leaders of the army group in addition to Tresckow.

After the meeting, a meal gave Tresckow the opportunity to ask Colonel Heinz Brandt, Hitler's accompanying officer, if he would do him the favor of taking along a small package with two bottles of cognac for Major General Helmuth Stieff, head of the Operations Department in the OKH. Brandt good-naturedly agreed. After lunch, Hitler, again accompanied by Kluge and Tresckow, drove to the airfield.

After Hitler had said goodbye to the officers of Army Group Center and turned to board the plane, Schlabrendorff activated the ignition and handed over the "package" to Colonel Brandt at Tresckow's signal. A few moments later, the plane took off for East Prussia.

The conspirators, who had meanwhile informed their friends in the OKH, above all General Olbricht and Major General Oster, waited in feverish suspense for the explosion. The acid bomb was designed and the ignition set in such a way that the firing pin had to be seized in about 30 minutes. The machine had to explode in the air.

After two hours, the message came from the Führer's headquarters in the Wolf's Lair that the Führer's plane had landed safely. The conspirators were faced with a conundrum. Their main concern now was to prevent the discovery of the failed attack. Tresckow immediately called Colonel Brandt to inform him that a mistake had been made and that he should not hand over the package he had taken with him. Brandt's reply and agreement showed that the attempted attack had not been discovered. The next day, Schlabrendorff flew to headquarters in a courier plane, pretending to be on a military mission, and exchanged the bomb with Colonel Brandt for a package that actually contained two bottles of cognac. The unsuspecting Brandt returned the bomb to Schlabrendorff. On the sleeper train to Berlin, Schlabrendorff opened the

package with a razor blade and found that the acid had leaked out properly, gnawed through the wire and the firing pin had snapped forward. But for some unknown reason the primer had not ignited, leaving the two charges intact.

Shortly afterwards, Tresckow learned that on March 21, on the occasion of the Heroes' Memorial Day, Hitler would visit the exhibition of booty weapons of Army Group Center after the official ceremony in the Berlin armory, where Freiherr von Gersdorff, as already described, attempted his assassination.

Despite all the failures, the conspirators continued their preparations for the coup d'état, especially as they realized that the interaction between the resistance circle of the front army and that of the reserve army did not yet promise sufficient security for a successful outcome. In order to remedy the recognized deficiencies, Tresckow pretended to be in urgent need of a longer rest as a result of the "exertions and excitement of the Russian campaign", whereupon he was naturally granted a cure lasting several months. Instead of taking the cure, he went to Neubabelsberg, between Berlin and Potsdam, to stay with his sister for ten full weeks. (Fabian v. Schlabrendorff, "Officers against Hitler", page 78).

With these people and their connections, anything was possible during the war. Thus we see the extraordinarily capable general staff officer of Army Group Center many days and weeks that were decisive for the front not in action for the troops, but at home, where he worked intensively for the conspiracy. According to Schlabrendorff, the first task was to carry out the general staff preparations for the planned coup d'état, secondly to clarify the political aims of the coup, thirdly to further influence the field marshals and generals close to the resistance circle and fourthly to prepare a new assassination attempt.

In addition, the arrest of Dohnanyi and the co-conspirator Pastor Bonhoeffer meant that time was pressing for a coup d'état. There was also a large gap to be filled, which had been created by Oster's retirement around this time. Colonel Count Schenk von Stauffenberg qualified as his successor and initially set himself the task of making the military preparations for the seizure of Berlin, the military, political and economic center of Germany. Thanks to his high position in the reserve army and the eager help of his co-conspirator General Friedrich Olbricht, head of the General Army Office in the reserve army, this was certainly not difficult for him, as the front was to see how it could make up for its major failures.

At Tresckow's instigation, Stauffenberg was given Major Ulrich von Oertzen from the staff of Army Group Center, who was highly skilled and experienced in the field of military operations. And because Oertzen was such a capable general, he had to help the conspiracy in Berlin instead of staying with his army group, which was in such dire need of him.

Schlabrendorff also reveals to us (on page 100 of the small book edition)

that Tresckow had taken his ten-week "recreational leave" in the summer months of 1943, when the battle for Kursk, which was very costly for us, was underway: "The basic preparations for the four (above-mentioned, author's note) tasks were practically created in Berlin in the summer months of 1943. The deed of July 20 was based on these preparations."

"Under the supervision of Tresckow, Stauffenberg and Oertzen spent days and nights laying down the plan in command form that was to lead to the occupation of Berlin by military forces on July 20." (Fabian v. Schlabrendorff, "Officers against Hitler", page 92.)

The war would undoubtedly have taken a different course on the eastern front if all the general staff officers of the army had fulfilled their military duty like the death-defying front officers and their men. In

In many cases, the exemplary efforts of the loyal staff officers were undone by the sabotage of their treacherous comrades. Hundreds of thousands of German soldiers had to pay for this sabotage with their lives.

When the military situation on the eastern and western fronts became increasingly threatening in the summer of 1944, Tresckow sent Lieutenant Colonel von Boeselager to Kluge, who had meanwhile become commander-in-chief in the west, with the order to implore him to "open the front in the west and fight not against the British and Americans, but against Hitler".

Kluge replied that although he was Supreme Commander West, he was in no way sure of his staff and felt so constrained that he could do nothing on his own initiative. At the moment he could not arrange for Tresckow or Schlabrendorff to join him, as suggested. (Fabian v. Schlabrendorff, "Officers against Hitler", page 136.)

Finally, the initiative to eliminate Hitler had passed to Stauffenberg, which led to the assassination attempt on July 20.

Stauffenberg was shot in the courtyard of Bendlerstraße on the night of July 21, together with General Olbricht, Colonel i. G. Mertz and Lieutenant Haeften, after a court martial under Colonel General Fromm had passed the death sentence.

Von Tresckow committed suicide on the Eastern Front immediately after July 20, and Schlabrendorff was arrested by a staff officer on August 20, 1944.

During his interrogation by the Secret State Police, Schlabrendorff was also questioned about Tresckow, of whom he painted a picture of his character that contradicted what he had said about Tresckow in his book "Officers against Hitler". According to the Kaltenbrunner report of November 2, 1944, he stated during the interrogation: "In general, people scolded von Tresckow because they thought he was very ambitious and believed that he wanted to curry favor with the top. Personally, I had the feeling that he was a careerist." ("Mirror image of a conspiracy", page 478.)

"Schlabrendorff witnessed the extraordinary activity that Tresckow

displayed in the weeks before the July 20 attack. As an example of how Tresckow subordinated everything to the plans for the attack, Schlabrendorff mentioned Oertzen's dispatch to Berlin. It took place at the end of June/beginning of July 1944, during the Soviet summer offensive of all times and although Oertzen was urgently needed as Ia of a corps division. . Tresckow put his car at his disposal, and Schla- brendorff had to get a Fieseler Stork to Warsaw and a berth in a sleeping car to Berlin.

a sleeping car to Berlin." ("Spiegelbild einer Verschwörung", page 395, Schlabrendorff's statement of August 28, 1944).

"Lieutenant General Heusinger described Tresckow as a 'very clever but also ambitious officer' who embodied 'the type of intellectual, in the bad sense of the word'. Von Tresckow was undoubtedly one of the drivers and the "evil spirit" of the putschist circle. Stauffenberg occasionally referred to Tresckow as his teacher." ("Mirror image of a conspiracy", Kaltenbrunner report of September 7, 1944).

The Kaltenbrunner report of September 11, 1944 documents the conspiracy's attempts to establish contact with Army Group South. Through the mediation of Baron von Palombini, Goerdeler met with General von Coll- witz, who was leading an armored corps in Army Group South at the time, at the Adlon Hotel in Berlin in the fall of 1943. Colonel Wagner, who was acquainted with Baron von Palombini from the Stahlhelm era, was also present at the meeting. Goerdeler gave von Collwitz a broad outline of the situation as he saw it, with the intention that von Collwitz would interest Field Marshal von Manstein accordingly, although von Collwitz was skeptical as to whether this would succeed.

At the instigation of General Zeitzier, then Chief of Staff of the Army, Tresckow was transferred to Army Group South after his aforementioned long leave. There he took over the command of a regiment, but was called upon again as Chief of the General Staff in Army High Command 2 by General Krebs and Colonel General Weiß, who had trained him as a general staff officer and was particularly fond of him. Here, according to the Kaltenbrunner report of September 18, 1944, he continued "his intrigues".

Retired Colonel Sauerbruch, who had sustained an injury during a bombing raid at the end of January 1944, was employed in Group I of the AHA (General Army Office) at the instigation of his friend Stauffenberg. Due to his wish to be transferred back to the front troops, he received a new assignment as Ia of the 4th Armored Division in March 1944. He wrote a letter to Stauffenberg from the front in which he drew his attention to the fact that they had received very poor replacements and that the reason for this was mainly to be found in the poor training activities of the replacement army. ("Mirror image of a conspiracy", page 401 ff.)

It can be admitted that due to the large losses in the East at the time, the training objective could not always be achieved due to a lack of time. However,

it must also be noted that no well-trained, enthusiastic replacements could be expected from a replacement army whose leading officers spent more time and effort on preparations.

officers spent more time and effort on preparations for assassinations and subversion than on their actual service to the troops, thus making themselves guilty of sabotage in this sector as well.

As his friend Schlabrendorff correctly writes in his book "Officers against Hitler", page 103, Stauffenberg had a position "from which he had a precise insight into the military workings of the German Wehrmacht. In addition, he was in a position to exert a not inconsiderable influence on the organization of the German Army".

On July 21, 1944, Colonel General Heinz Guderian was appointed by Hitler as Chief of the Army General Staff.

As Guderian himself reports in his memoirs, the development of the situation up to July 20, 1944 was shocking. "In order to help, the OKH first had to be made operational. This central office of the Eastern Front was in desperate shape. My predecessor had intended to move the OKH to the Maybach camp near Zossen near Berlin. Essential parts were already there, such as the Quartermaster General with all his organs, the Wehrmacht and Army Transport Chief and numerous other important departments. Most of the communications had already been rerouted. From East Prussia, it was only with difficulty that talks could be held with the front and for the supply of the entire army, which was the responsibility of the OKH. The first decision that had to be made was about the future headquarters of the OKH. I decided on East Prussia, where Hitler and the OKW would remain. The transfers already made to Zossen had to be reversed immediately ...

I appointed General Wenck, who was currently Chief of Staff at Schörner, as Chief of the Operations Department, but soon extended his position to Chief of the OKH Command Staff and placed the Organization Department and the Foreign Armies East Department under his command in addition to the Operations Department, in order to place the entire operational apparatus in one hand. . . The Foreign Armies East Division was retained by the proven Colonel Gehlen. Colonel Toppe became Quartermaster General in place of General Wagner (conspirator, the author), who had committed suicide." (Heinz Guderian, "Erinnerungen eines Soldaten", page 308ff.)

If Guderian had had any idea at the time that Colonel and later General Gehlen was part of the conspiracy, he would certainly have dropped him.

General Reinhard (missing from the end of 1939 to the beginning of October 1940) was the personal general staff officer of the Chief of Staff of the Army, Colonel General Halder, and until his appointment as Chief of Department

Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt, as Commander-in-Chief West, tolerated the affiliation of members of his staff to the

General Carl Heinrich von Stülpnagel, military commander in France and leader of the conspirator group in Paris, sent co-conspirator Dr. Hans Buwert to Madrid and Lisbon at the beginning of 1943 with the task of finding out from sources how the Western Allies had received the conspiracy's peace feelers.

"Foreign Armies East" on April 1, 1942 within the Army's Operations Department. He therefore came from the Zossen atmosphere, where resistance had been alive from the very first day of the Third Reich. He only revealed to the public that he was also part of the conspiracy in his memoirs "Der Dienst" (The Service), published in 1971. In it he recounts that in the winter of 1941/42 he had an exchange of ideas with von Tresckow, whom he knew well from the War Academy and with whom he came to the conclusion that the Russian campaign and thus the war had to be lost, "not because it could not be won politically and militarily, but because the constant interventions of the supreme leadership (Hitler, the author) resulted in a chain of political and military elementary errors that had to lead to the loss of the campaign and thus the war. When we asked ourselves how this development could be prevented, there was logically only one way: the elimination of Hitler." (Reinhard Gehlen, "Der Dienst", page 57.)

Gehlen did not tell us in his memoirs whether Tresckow also believed that Hitler's victory should be prevented "under all circumstances and by all means".

Now, in 1974, two officers of the German Bundeswehr spoke out with publications in which Gehlen was given nothing less than lessons. In their thorough studies and analyses, they proved that Gehlen's assessments of the situation, on which the top military leadership had to rely, were completely wrong in most and above all the most important cases. What do Gehlen's critics have to say about his assessment of the situation before the decisive battle for Stalingrad, which ended with the surrender of the 6th Army at the end of January 1943?

First of all, Lieutenant Colonel Kehrig explains in his analysis and documentation "Stalingrad": "The Foreign Armies East Division maintained its assessment that an attack was to be expected on the Don, but that the main operation in winter would be in the area of Army Group Center, and explained this once again in detail in a detailed assessment of the situation on November 6 (1942, author's note). For military and political reasons, the enemy was in need of a major and rapid success, which he believed he could achieve more easily with an operation against Army Group Center than against the front of Army Group B (southern section of the Eastern Front, author's note). In the German army center, the course of the front with a favorable starting area in terms of traffic would lend itself to an operation against Smolensk, which - if successful - would open up the possibility of cutting off the forces of the German northern wing by continuing the operation to the west into the Baltic countries. With increasing deut

the focus of Soviet offensive intentions in front of Army Group Center is becoming increasingly clear." (Manfred Kehrig, "Stalingrad", page 101.)

"Only on December 9," Kehrig continues on page 118, "three weeks after the start of the major Soviet attack on the Don (Stalingrad Front, author's note), did it (Abteilung Fremde Heere Ost, author's note) report that after the stalling of Soviet operations in the area of Army Group Center and the unexpected enemy success in the area of the Romanian 3rd Army, it might be necessary to contend with the possibility of a possible Soviet attack. After the stalling of Soviet operations in the area of Army Group Center and the unexpected enemy success in the area of the Romanian 3rd Army, the possibility must be expected that the Russians will shift the focus of their force deployment to the southern part of the front4 because the situation there now offers them better prospects of success. In contrast, the Soviet literature unreservedly states that the focus of the winter offensive had been in the area around Stalingrad from the outset according to the plans.

Did the Foreign Armies East Division therefore make an error of judgment? It is certain that according to the OKH situation map East of November 18, whose enemy section was based on information from the Foreign Armies East Division, the Soviet 5th Panzer Army was probably still in the area east of Orel, although the commander of Intelligence Reconnaissance 1 had already reported it as shifted to the southwestern front (= Group A) on November **16**."

This statement by Kefirig indicates that the report by the commander of Intelligence Reconnaissance 1 on November 10, according to which the very strong 5th Soviet Panzer Army had been identified on the southwestern front, was not yet visible on the OKH's eastern situation map on November 18. Accordingly, the OKH and Hitler must still have been of the opinion on November 18 that the 5th Soviet Panzer Army was located east of Orel in order to launch its attack against Army Group Center from there, as Gehlen had repeatedly announced with strong arguments. Thus the top leadership had to focus its attention on the expected major offensive by the Soviets in the central section of the front, while in reality they were already preparing their major attack on the Stalingrad front.

The same diabolical game was being repeated here as on the invasion front, where Hitler and the OKW, with the decisive help of the conspirator Roenne of Fremde Heere West, had been misled by the ghost army supposedly lying in readiness in south-east England.

It is probably very interesting, and one cannot believe one's eyes, that the left-liberal magazine "Der Spiegel", in its issue of February 9, 1976, joins in the criticism of Gehlen by writing under the title "Stalingrad - Fremde Heere": "Adolf Hitler's Reich had finally lost its aura of military invincibility. Then the dictator spoke the

tator spoke the liberating word: 'I alone am responsible for Stalingrad'.

The humiliated military officers, including Field Marshal Erich von MansIteiin, found this "soldierly decent", but then they used the Führer's words in a rather unconventional way: they turned the formal gesture of the supreme warlord, who stood before his military officers, into a confession of sole responsibility. After the war, they never tired of explaining in their memoirs how Hitler had gambled away the possible victory at Stalingrad through amateurish interventions in their warfare. According to their thesis, Hitler had been warned in good time of the Soviet counterattack on the Don, but had ignored all warnings.

One general in particular, who had made an elegant transition from the Hitler era to the post-war democratic era, had a lot to say about Hitler's stubbornness: Reinhard Gehlen, head of the enemy reconnaissance division 'Foreign Armies East (FHO)' during the Second World War and later president of the Federal Intelligence Service.

His department, which "always correctly recognized the enemy's intentions in advance", had "predicted exactly where the blow would fall and which of our armies would be affected" ten days before the Soviet counter-offensive in the Stalingrad area. But Hitler had not listened to him. Memoirist Gehlen was furious: "What use are the best secret reports if their warnings are not heeded?""

Now, however, a group of younger historians has drastically revised the Stalingrad theses of the German military. Using previously untapped sources such as the estates of deceased field marshals and the statements of newly interviewed witnesses, they have exposed the old version as a web of legend and apology.

The first to do so was Bundeswehr Lieutenant Hans-Heinrich Wilhelm, who examined the forecasts of Gehlen's FHO and discovered that the legendary division had repeatedly, including at Stalingrad, failed to recognize the Soviet counter-offensives in time. He was followed by the British historian David Irving with a military biography of Hitler that provides new insights into the complicated relationship between the dictator and his military.

The most thorough correction of old ideas about Stalingrad, however, was achieved by Bundeswehr Lieutenant Manfred Kehrig, who meticulously reconstructed the decision-making processes on the German side in the first and certainly for a long time authoritative documentation of the Battle of Stalingrad.

What the three historians have in common is a sensational reversal of previous theories: It was not the German generals but Hitler who warned of the dangers lurking in Stalingrad. "One of the few", summarizes the

contemporary historian Philipp W. Fabry summarizes, "who foresaw a major Russian offensive in the Don bend with the aim of encircling the 6th Army was Adolf Hitler."

A coincidence had alerted the dictator to the dangers: a captured map from the historical archives of the Red Army. It was a yellowed piece of paper from 1919 showing how the Red Army, led by Stalin, had broken out across the Don between Stalingrad (then still Tsaritsyn) and Rostov and destroyed the "White Guards" of Tsar General Denikin. Hitler took out a large magnifying glass - the scene took place on August 16, 1942 at his headquarters in Vinnitsa, Ukraine - and studied every detail. He realized that he was in a similar position to Denikin.

His 6th Army, the strongest unit of Army Group B, stood in front of Stalingrad. Its left flank leaned against the Don, on the west bank of which the front ran. It was held exclusively by allies who were poorly equipped, inadequately supplied and by no means particularly eager to fight: Hungarians, Italians and Romanians. The right flank of Army Group B only consisted of a front line just under 100 kilometers long, which led from Stalingrad southwards into the Kalmyk steppe and was fragmentarily occupied by weak Romanian units. Then there was a gap of 400 kilometers to Army Group A in the Caucasus, secured only by a single German infantry division.

Hitler instinctively sensed where and how the German units were endangered. If the Red Army repeated the 1919 operation and pushed through to Rostov via the Don, the entire southern front would be cut off and with it four German armies.

From then on, Hitler sensed mortal danger first and foremost on the Don. Kehrig confirms: "The threat to the Don flank was constantly on his mind." However, he was pretty much alone in his headquarters with this assessment of the situation. The Army General Staff and, above all, its chief enemy situation observer Gehlen could not decide to see the main danger in the Stalingrad area. After a long period of uncertainty, the FHO expected a Russian offensive on the Don at the end of August. However, the usefulness of this forecast suffered from the fact that the FHO named seven other front sections between Leningrad and Stalingrad where Russian attacks were considered just as likely.

Then, however, Gehlen's analysts settled on an incorrect forecast: the Soviets would not strike their main blow in the south on the Don, but at Smolensk, 1300 kilometers from Stalingrad. From then on, Gehlen's division obsessed over the middle section so intensely that it realized far too late what was brewing near Stalingrad. "The mass of the Soviet armored brigades (in the Stalingrad area) was not

reconnoitred", Kehrig judges. The FHO's misanalyses also influenced the Chief of Staff Franz Haider, who treated clear instructions from his Führer as dilatory because he apparently considered them to be wrong or premature. As early as mid-August, Hitler ordered the Army Chief of Staff: "Have German heavy artillery and Paks move up immediately behind the Hungarian security section."

But Haider only carried out this order weeks later, too late and with insufficient forces.

At almost the same time, Hitler had "requested" (Kehrig) that the 22nd Panzer Division be moved behind the Italian section of the Don. But Haider obviously ignored this request too. Hitler therefore later ordered the immediate movement of the 22nd Panzer Division and two other divisions behind the Italian lines. This was in mid-September, when the Soviets came up with a plan that no one on the German side except Hitler feared. They wanted to encircle Stalingrad, which had already been half-conquered by the Germans. The plan came from the Soviet Chief of the General Staff, Marshal Vasilevsky, and the commander-in-chief of the southern army groups, Marshal Zhukov. They suggested to Stalin that a pincer operation on both sides of Stalingrad should "deal a devastating blow to the enemy", as Zhukov wrote in his memoirs. Stalin agreed and operational planning began in October. Stalingrad was to be his greatest victory, so he concentrated all available forces there.

The FHO, however, insisted on expecting the enemy offensive elsewhere. Kehrig: "Since the beginning of October, the focus of the Soviet autumn and winter operations was now clearly ahead of Army Group Center due to the distribution of forces according to the department."

Radio listening services, reconnaissance planes, prisoner interrogators and the troops' battlefield observation could still report threatening signs of an imminent major offensive at Stalingrad - the FHO remained steadfastly fixated on the supposedly most threatened middle section. When Soviet transports rolled almost non-stop into the bridgeheads on the Don at the end of October, FHO was not able to recognize any preparations for an attack, but merely an "increase in enemy activity". The reports that the Soviets were building one bridge after another across the Don were also interpreted by the Army General Staff as preparation for localized attacks at best.

But Hitler "knew better", as Irving acknowledges, "he had built bridges over the rivers himself and knew what was about to happen". Hitler therefore had barrage positions built behind the endangered sections. On November 2, he ordered the Luftwaffe to bomb bridges and troop concentrations on the Don. Finally, he ordered the 6th Pan-
and two infantry divisions from the west and to place them behind the Romanian 3rd Army and the Italian 8th Army.

The withdrawal of three divisions from the west cost Hitler considerable effort, as he firmly expected Allied invasions in France and Norway. The fact that he weakened his forces there proves how clearly he saw the danger on the Don.

Gehlen's department and the entire general staff were eager to demonstrate to Hitler how unfounded his fears were. Two weeks before the Soviet offensive broke out, the FHO still saw no signs of an "imminent threat of major attacks" on the Don. The next day, on November 6, the department once again confirmed in a detailed assessment of the situation that it was becoming "increasingly clear" that

the main Soviet operations were to be expected solely in the area of Army Group Center. . .

By November 11, German radio reconnaissance had largely succeeded in deciphering the Soviet force structure and command structure in the Stalingrad area. Particular attention was paid to a dreaded battering ram of Soviet offensive power: the 5th Panzer Army. The commander of German Intelligence Reconnaissance 1 reported that the Russians had pushed their 5th Panzer Army into the Bolshoi Bridgehead on the Don. Until then, this army, which with its 376 tanks was to be by far the most powerful unit in the Battle of Stalingrad, had been in the central section near Orel.

At the end of October, it had been moved to the Don - unnoticed by the Germans. On the eastern situation map of the Army High Command (OKH), however, this Soviet army was located in the Orel area on November 18: the enemy section of this map was based solely on information from the Gehlens Division.

The FHO simply did not take note of the 5th Panzer Army at Stalingrad, which even Kehrig, who was otherwise sympathetic to Gehlen, found "astonishing". From the message from the commander of Intelligence Reconnaissance 1, which should have immediately triggered a major alert, the FHO strategists merely gathered that there was a risk of a *minor* attack across the Don. The double encirclement of the German forces between the Don and the Volga, also considered possible by the radio reconnaissance officers, was not taken into account.

On the next day, November 19, the 5th Panzer Army, which had not been recognized until the end, rolled down the Don front. Irving: "It happened in the place Hitler had predicted." Three days later, the German 6th Army was trapped in Stalingrad. Three weeks later, with the 6th Army practically lost, the FHO forecast gradually adjusted to reality. After all, the division now considered it possible
that the Soviets could "possibly" shift the focus of their operations from Army Group Center (i.e. Smolensk) "more to the southern part of the front".

The historian Hans-Heinrich Wilhelm commented: "However, the further Soviet preparations for the attack on the Don could really no longer be overlooked."

And even Marshal Zhukov, the victor of Stalingrad, openly admitted that Gehlen had made it easier for him to triumph: "The situation of the German soldiers fighting in and around Stalingrad had been made worse by their inadequate reconnaissance."

"The German reconnaissance," said Zhukov, "had not recognized that we were preparing the largest offensive in the Stalingrad area, in which eleven armies ... 13,500 guns and grenade launchers, around 90,0 tanks and 1,414 aircraft were involved."

For the Foreign Armies East Division, the Soviet armies had indeed remained

foreign armies until the very end.

In his work "Die Prognosen der Abteilung Fremde Heere Ost 1942-1945", Hans-Heinrich Wilhelm, a lieutenant in the German army, comes to the same conclusion as Kehrig regarding the battle for Stalingrad: "In a war academy lecture in September, Gehlen said that the course of the operations justified the hope that the area around Stalingrad and the oil regions in the Caucasus - still several hundred kilometers away - would be firmly in German hands before the onset of winter. Neither of these predictions was confirmed.

In mid-October 1942, the Foreign Armies East Division expected a major Soviet attack, but anticipated it - from the beginning of November - between Toropez and Ssuchinichi, i.e. in the area of Army Group Center. The attack, presumably with insufficient forces, would be aimed at the Baltic . . . At the beginning of November, the division still assumed that no major enemy attacks were to be expected on the Don front. The enemy would find a more favorable deployment area in front of Army Group Center, and success there would be particularly desirable for him because it would make the German offensive against Moscow, which was feared for 1943, more difficult. Smolensk represented a worthwhile and not too distant objective; the fact that the entire Army Group North could later be cut off must at least appear conceivable to the other side . . .

It was only on December 9, three weeks after the start of the pincer operation against Stalingrad, that the Foreign Armies East Division considered it possible that the enemy might shift the focus of its force deployment from Army Group I e Center to the southern part of the front. However, the further Soviet preparations for the attack on the Don could really no longer be ignored.

to see... Two days after this forecast came the major Soviet attack on the Italian section of the front and on the Chir Front - the beginning of the end for the 6th Army in Stalingrad. The attack and its consequences probably came as such a surprise because the Germans believed that the Soviets would have their hands full in repelling the attempt to relieve Stalingrad... However, the attacking units under the command of Colonel-General Hoth were far too weak to seriously disrupt the Russian plans, even though they had achieved considerable initial successes. By mid-January, the majority of the German troops had been thrown back behind the Donets section. Hoth's elite units, which finally had to evade behind the Manych, now had the longest route back. In Stalingrad, however, the long hopeless desperate battle raged on for another two weeks." (Hans- Heinrich Wilhelm, "Die Prognosen der Abteilung Fremde Heere Ost 1942-1945", page 47ff.)

The same misleading assessment of the situation by Gehlen is confirmed by David Irving in "Hitler und seine Feldherren", page 429f. Irving speaks of "fatal misreporting by the intelligence services" from the fall of 1942 onwards. "Until early November, Gehlen's Foreign Armies East Division persistently predicted the opening of the Russian offensive not in the south, but against Smolensk or even Velikiye Luki, 1300 km north of Stalingrad . . . Hitler ordered the first three

Luftwaffe field divisions and parts of the 11th Army to be sent to Velikiye Luki - and that was tantamount to abandoning Leningrad. But in his opinion, a Russian attack on Smolensk was even more likely (due to Gehlen's misleading assessment of the situation, the author); he therefore had the 7th Airborne Division and also the 20th Armored Division brought into the Smolensk area. These were fatal and fatal mistakes.

However, Hitler did not accept Gehlen's judgment without reluctance. On October 26, he was visibly concerned about concrete indications of Russian plans to cross the Don at the very point where the Axis front was weakest-namely, in the section held only by reluctant Italians and Romanians. Army Group B interpreted the dense nighttime traffic toward Serafimovich as insignificant replacement transports; but when the enemy began building heavy bridges across the Don, Hitler knew better; he had built bridges over rivers himself and knew what this portended. He ordered more Luftwaffe field divisions to be moved into the endangered Italian and Romanian sections "as a corset bar". He was convinced that Stalin was planning a westward advance on Rostov - and that he would strike before the end of 1942.

The Army General Staff was of a different opinion. On November 6, Gehlen assured them that there were no signs of an imminent Soviet offensive in the south; far more likely was an offensive against Smolensk, followed by an advance to the Baltic Sea with the aim of cutting off the entire Army Group North. In this way, the Russians would eliminate the danger for Moscow and achieve a relatively easy prestige success; in the south, the traffic situation was far too unfavorable for them. Gehlen also explained that the Russian offensive would not begin before the ground frost set in. It was to turn out that he was terribly mistaken on every single point."

Irving, "Hitler and his commanders", page 441, continues: "On November 19, the telephone rang at the Berghof, and Colonel General Zeitzier, Chief of the Army General Staff, who was fighting an almost forgotten war from his OKH headquarters in East Prussia, answered. On the Don front north of Stalingrad, heavy artillery fire had begun and increased to a barrage, and now masses of tanks with mounted Russian infantry were swarming forward in overwhelming numbers. The Romanians fled in panic. It happened at the point on the front that Hitler had predicted. Two days later, Stalingrad was surrounded and the wildest drama of the war began."

Whether Gehlen was really "terribly mistaken on every single point", as Irving comments, is not certain, because it is impossible to see inside people. As a conspirator, Gehlen can at least be counted among the "confidants in the command offices of the Eastern Front", of whom Colonel General Beck spoke to his co-conspirator Leuschner. There were undoubtedly many opportunities to regulate the war "until the collapse of the regime" with the help of these "confidants".

Although Gehlen counts himself as part of the conspiracy, it must not be claimed that he deliberately, i.e. intentionally, deceived the military leadership with his misleading assessments of the situation, because it simply cannot be proven. It was different with his friend Roenne on the invasion front, because his deliberate

deception could be proven. On the other hand, it can be justifiably suspected that there were members of the resistance in his division apart from him, some of whom misappropriated the report from the commander of Intelligence 1.

The following entries in the war diary of the Wehrmacht command staff show that Hitler recognized the danger point in this now decisive battle very early on:

"September 9, 1942

In Army Group B, the Don front is to be expanded and mined as much as possible; furthermore, reserves are to be drawn from the Stalingrad area behind the Don front and army artillery is also to be deployed there, as the Führer expects strong enemy attacks against the front of the Italian 8th Army in the direction of Rostov in the coming winter."

"September 16, 1942

In view of the expected enemy attacks against the section of the Italian 8th Army, the Führer orders that the 22nd Panzer Div. and the 113th Inf. Div. of the 6th Army be moved immediately behind the Italian section." (Helmuth Greiner, "Die oberste Wehr- machtsfuhrung", page 409 f.)

Hitler's precautionary measures are also reported in the official entry in the war diary of the Wehrmacht command staff dated October 26, 1942: "The Führer again expresses his concern about a major Russian attack, perhaps a winter offensive, in the section of the allied armies across the Don on Rostov. Reasons for this concern include the strong enemy movements in this area and the bridge-building over the Don that has been carried out in many places. The Führer orders all three allied armies to deploy air force field divisions as "corset bars". This would free up the divisions deployed in the front line and, together with other supplied units, could be made available as reserves behind the front of the allies." (Helmuth Greiner, "Die oberste Wehrmachts- fuhrung", page 415.)

These instructions were not fulfilled, or only to a limited extent. At least, however, the XXXXVIII Panzer Corps under Lieutenant General Heim stood in reserve behind the Romanians. He had two armored divisions at his disposal.

On November 19, after the heaviest artillery preparation, the Red Army pounced on the 3rd Romanian Army and overran it. The Romanians crumbled into the icy steppes. Now the hour had come for Lieutenant General Heim, who had been ordered to stand ready to intercept the Russian attack.

The British military historian William Craig reports what happened: "At last the German High Command did something to protect the flanks. The XXXXVIII Panzer Corps, which was a good 80 kilometers southwest of the dangerous Russian bridgeheads at Kletskaya and Serafimovich on the Don, received urgent orders to advance into the threatened sector.

Under its commander, Lieutenant General Ferdinand Heim, a good friend and former Chief of Staff of Paulus, the XXXXVIII Corps set off to the north-east with rattling tank tracks. But after just a few kilometers, the column came to a halt again because several tanks caught fire. Others kept misfiring and eventually stopped

altogether. Mechanics, who were now deployed to check the vehicles, quickly found the cause. While the tanks had been standing unused behind the front line for weeks, mice had taken up residence in the vehicles and chewed through the insulation of the electrical cables. As a result, the XXXXVIII Corps only rolled into its new location several days late and at walking pace. It had shrunk; only 32 of the 104 tanks of the 22nd Panzer Division were operational.

Nobody informed Hitler about the state of the reserves."

The situation became increasingly threatening. William Craig reports further: "General Heim advanced slowly, finally reaching Blinov without coming into contact with the Russians. Heim was obviously not up to the situation. He was also unable to make contact with the Romanian forces under General Michael Lascar, who were still putting up resistance. Heim finally retreated to the south, towards Tschier. The field police arrested him on Hitler's orders and transferred him to Germany for a court martial. Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel saved his life. He was discharged from the Wehrmacht." (William Craig, "The Battle of Stalingrad", page 140f.)

Gehlen's misleading assessments of the situation with his Foreign Armies East Division, the failure of the XXXXVIII Panzer Corps and the pitiful supply of the troops by the army and air force were the causes of the Stalingrad tragedy.

In view of the widespread sabotage, it is difficult to believe only in the Russian mice that destroyed the insulation of the electrical cables in the vehicles and tanks of Heim's armored corps. But there is no doubt that the 6th Army, which was the focal point of the battle, was inadequately equipped and supplied from the outset. The supply of the entire Army Group B was in the hands of the active conspirator Colonel i. G. Finckh, who was sentenced to death and executed after July 20, 1944. In June 1944, during the invasion battle, Finckh reported to Rommel as the new Chief Quartermaster in the West and, as Speidel reports in "Invasion 1944", page 126, "informed him of the preparations to eliminate Hitler and the planned overthrow of the state". At the time, Rommel instructed Colonel Finckh to "discuss with the Quartermaster General (Wagner, the author) the urgently needed harmonization of all measures at headquarters and in the

of all measures at headquarters and at home and to report back to him as soon as possible."

Of course, the permanent betrayal of all German intentions, operational plans, troop movements, armament levels, etc., which the conspirator Fellgiebel had made possible through his parallel connection in the Führer headquarters and his direct wire connection with Switzerland, where the Soviet agent group around Rössler, alias "Lucy", did not have to wait long for the reports of the German conspirator group in the OKH and OKW, also contributed to the Stalingrad tragedy to a very considerable extent.

Colonel General Halder, Chief of the Army General Staff until the fall of 1942, testified as a witness at a trial in 1955:

"Almost all German acts of aggression became known to the enemy immediately after their planning in the High Command of the Wehrmacht, even before they landed on my desk, through betrayal by a member of the OKW. It was not possible to block this source during the entire war." (Paul Carell, "Scorched Earth", page 84.)

The betrayal reports from the Swiss Red Three to the Moscow headquarters with the code name "Director" were made by radio messages, as the following examples show:

"To Director. About Pakbo from Berlin. Serious differences of opinion in the OKW regarding operations in the southern part of the Eastern Front. Prevailing opinion that attack towards Stalingrad futile and success of Caucasus operation questioned. Hitler demands Stalingrad offensive and is supported by Göring. Dora (Rado). August 12, 1942."

According to Friedrich Lenz, "Stalingrad - Der verlorene Sieg", page 175, this message refers to the Führer's directive No. 45 of July 23, 1942, which was apparently the subject of a debate in the Führer's headquarters about the continuation of the offensive push to Stalingrad.

At the end of August, "Lucy" had reported the transfer of several infantry divisions to the Eastern Front, and a few days later, details of their location, composition, equipment and operational objectives followed. On November 9, 1942, when the 6th Army had almost completely occupied Stalingrad, "Director" radioed the following request to "Dora" from Moscow:

"Where are the rear defensive positions of the Germans on the line southwest of Stalingrad and along the Don? Where defensive positions are already being built on the Stalingrad-Kletskaya and Stalingrad-Kalach sections. Their characteristics. Characteristics of the fortification works carried out by the Germans on the Budenovsk-Divnoy-Verkhne-Tirskaya-Kalach-Kachalinskaya-Kletskaya-Dnieper-Beresina line. Director."

"Mr. Canaris," Friedrich Lenz continued, "reported nothing to FHQ_ at that time about the Russian offensive on the Don, but a major offensive from the Moscow area, as can be seen from the available reports. When the offensive on the Don had not yet been completed successfully, the Russians were already interested in the German countermeasures in the following radio message:

'To Dora. 26. 11. 1942

e) Send details of concrete measures to OKW in connection with Red Army advance near Stalingrad.

f) Always send all information on plans and measures OKW in connection with our combat operations in the East. Director*

The following telegram of December 2 is devoted to research on German reserves, as it was known that this question was of great importance because of possible German offensive intentions:

'To Rado. The most important task for the near future is the most precise determination of all German reserves in the hinterland. Director*

In the radio message of December 7, Moscow demands:

'Determine urgently through Taylor:

Which units are now going from the West and Norway to the Eastern Front and which from the Eastern Front to the West and the Balkans. Specify numbers.

What plans does OKW have on the Eastern Front in connection with the Red Army offensive? Will Wehrmacht only fight defensive battles or is OKW planning counterattacks on any section of the Eastern Front? If so, where, when and with which forces? Important task. Director

December 11 is a very important day, because it is the day before the start of the German offensive to save the Stalingrad Army. It is of course extremely important that the Russians learn of this quickly. So they can take the telegram:

'Begin an offensive tomorrow to free you. Führer's order. Expect to spend Christmas with you.*" (Friedrich Lenz, "Stalingrad -Der verlorene Sieg", page 175ff.)

It is clear from the content of the radio messages reproduced above how the enemy was informed in detail about all strategic and tactical plans and orders of the German warfare. As we can see, the conspiracy did a great job in bringing the German Wehrmacht and thus the entire nation to its knees.

When the military head of the conspiracy, Colonel General Beck, was informed of the great victories on the Don and in the Caucasus in the summer of 1942, he declared "that these only had the effect of prolonging the war, because the other side was all the more inevitable".

side was only the more inevitably forced to play for time". "He was therefore waiting for the long-awaited replacement of this period of victory with one of defeat", as Friedrich Lenz rightly commented. "In fact, he did not have to wait very long, because this expert, who was lying in wait, must not have found it difficult to identify the weak points on our front, given the intelligence sources available to him. How he must have breathed a sigh of relief when, after the Russian offensive of November 19, the 6th Army's encirclement in Stalingrad became apparent. From then on, the FHQBeck was in full swing.

Mr. Gisevius, whom General Oster, Canaris' chief of staff, had delegated to Switzerland with Canaris' consent to cultivate contacts with the enemy, was recalled to Berlin at the beginning of December and the Stalingrad Putsch was agreed." Gisevius testified about this under oath in Nuremberg:

"After we had not succeeded in persuading the victorious generals to stage a coup, we now tried at least to persuade them to stage a coup when they were obviously running into their great catastrophe. This catastrophe, which found its first visible expression in Stalingrad, had been foreseen in every detail by Colonel General Beck since December 1942. We immediately made all preparations in order to organize at least a military coup at the time, which could be foreseen with mathematical precision, when Paul's army had to surrender completely defeated. I myself was brought back from Switzerland at that time and took part in all the talks and preparations. I can only testify to the fact that this time a great deal had been prepared, that contact had been established with the field marshals in the East and with Witzleben in the West; but once again things turned out differently, with Field Marshal Paulus surrendering instead of giving us the cue that Kluge should then appear, as agreed, to trigger the coup from the East."

Gisevius also testified about what had been prepared for the coup and stated under oath;

that Colonel General Beck had contacted one field marshal and then another;

that General v. Tresckow and Lieutenant Colonel Graf von der Schulenburg had gone to Manstein's headquarters;

that General Fellgiebel, General of the Intelligence Troops, had set up a special telephone line from headquarters to General Olbricht in the OKW;

that firm arrangements had been made with Field Marshal v. Witzleben for the initiation of a putsch;

that further firm agreements had been made with the military governor of Belgium, Colonel General von Falkenhausen;

that certain contingents of armored troops had been assembled in the vicinity of Berlin;

that those troop commanders were already assembled in the OKH who were to act in this action ... .

An air force officer is said to have delivered the corresponding letter from Beck to Paulus, but the latter claims not to have received it. " . . . With regard to the conspirators' preparations, it should be added that at that time Stauffenberg, as a senior officer with the Chief of Staff of the Reserve Army, had to set up new armored units . . ." (Friedrich Lenz, "Stalingrad - Der verlorene Sieg", page 179ff.)

On November 22, 1942, when the encirclement of the 6th Army was complete, General v. Seydlitz, commander of the 51st AK, ordered the evacuation of the strong position of the 94th Infantry Division without the knowledge of his army commander Paulus, even though the division itself had not been attacked. He also did not inform his neighboring units. Lenz has the author of the book "Stalingrad, wie es wirklich war", Günter Poepke, who was a member of the 94th Infantry Division, report on the consequences of this behavior in his work, page 183:

"Paul did not listen to Seydlitz. He obeyed, believing in the promised help. Schmidt, Paulus' chief of staff, encouraged him in this. For him, there was nothing else to do but to enforce the order from the Führer's headquarters at all costs.

In order to present the army command with a fait accompli, Seydlitz ordered the withdrawal of the left wing of his corps to a shortened position in front of the Spartakovka sector. With this measure he wanted to initiate the breakthrough to the west. As a result of his orders, my 94th Infantry Division, which now belonged to Seydlitz's corps, also had to vacate its previous fixed positions.

The Russians immediately took advantage of the favorable opportunity that presented itself and pressed after our evacuating troops in continuous attacks. In the open steppe terrain without cover, the grenadiers fought off the advancing tide. Wave upon wave of massed infantry, accompanied by tanks, charged against them. Exploiting every hole in the ground, the Russians seeped through, only to attack again and again in bright clusters with 'Urrä'. Packs of crouching figures swarmed everywhere behind our dismounting grenadiers. Snipers with telescopic sights on their rifles shot down our platoon leaders and machine gun operators. A large proportion of the Russians, mostly from the 5th and 6th wave of an attack, were only equipped with spades or hand grenades. They grabbed rifles from their fallen comrades. Every Russian fighter knows with what great plea
rang in defending and attacking in such situations. The losses on both sides were high, but ours could no longer be replaced."

Walther von Seydlitz led the "League of German Officers" in Russian captivity, which was founded alongside the "Free Germany" National Committee. Like other groups in the Red Army, this league was tasked with undermining the fighting morale of the German troops and persuading them to desert or mutiny.

As the statements made under oath by the conspirator Dr. Gisevius show, the hard core of the conspiracy also had treasonous connections to the Bolshevik supporters of the National Committee "Free Germany".

The intelligence services of Canaris and Gehlen had learned in the summer of 1941 that on August 10, German traps of General Hoth had captured a divisional command post of the 16th Soviet Army east of Smolensk, in which the secret field police found, to their great astonishment, two battle plans of the OKW and a copy of a recently issued order to prefer the second plan to the first.

They also became aware that in Bryansk the Secret Field Police had found an exact reproduction of Colonel General Haider's "Plan I" on another racial command post, which he had presented to Hitler in Rastenburg on August 18, 1941.

In both cases, this was documentary evidence that there must have been traitors in Germany's military leadership. To neutralize these German saboteurs by any means necessary, no matter who was under suspicion, would have been the indispensable duty of Canaris, Gehlen and Fellgiebel. Well - that could not have been the case, because they would certainly have come across their friends in the conspiracy or themselves during their research.

Not passing on important reports also meant sabotaging the war effort. Paul Carell reports on a drastic case of this kind of sabotage:

"In the summer of 1942, after a long search, an agent transmitter was located and unearthed in the Warsaw suburb of Otwock. Two former Polish officers, Captain Arzyszewski and Lieutenant Meyer, and their most important collaborators were arrested. The two Polish officers had been parachuted from a Soviet plane south of Warsaw in the summer of 1941. A transmitter and 2500 dollars were in their luggage. Their mission was to set up a spy ring for military intelligence and transmit the information to Moscow by radio.

The captain constantly traveled around the country and collected the information. The lieutenant operated the transmitter. The code and almost 5000 duplicates of the encrypted messages transmitted to Moscow were recovered by the German defense. And what presented itself to the eye after deciphering was breathtaking. The amount of military secrets these two agents had gathered in the rear of the German front within a year was unimaginable. The radio messages gave a complete picture of the German deployment for the summer offensive 1 9·42... The Red General Staff had an easy time recognizing the focal points of the German spring offensive from the information provided by its two Polish radio agents alone . . .

What did the German OKW do in response to this alarming discovery? Shouldn't the lesson of the Otwock case have opened the eyes of the German Wehrmacht leadership to the danger of such radio agents, the new and typical agent species of the Second World War? Was it not obvious that the Warsaw Ring was not an isolated case? Did the experts rush to the Führer's headquarters with the material they had found to report to Hitler and the High Command? No!

The summary report of the German radio defense, which cracked the Warsaw Ring, never came under the eyes of Adolf Hitler. General Erich Fellgiebel, the head

of Wehrmacht intelligence liaison at the Führer's headquarters, returned the report to the Funkabwehr on the grounds that it was too long to present to the Führer. When a shortened version was submitted, it was described as too 'alarming'; the submission would, it was said, only upset the Führer." (Paul Carell, "Scorched Earth", page 85.)

The sabotage of the conspiracy against the Luftwaffe

In view of the planned and systematic approach of the hard core of the conspiracy, which was determined to do anything, it would be incomprehensible if the Luftwaffe had been spared betrayal and sabotage.

When the multi-front war and later enemy bombing attacks on German cities and armaments factories became inevitable, this led to such diverse demands on the German air force that it could no longer meet them. While it had been able to perform in the Polish and French campaigns as well as in the Norway and Crete sub-

While the British expeditionary force was still able to achieve some successes, it was denied these in later decisive operations, mainly due to material inferiority. Even Göring's assurance at the end of the first phase of the Western campaign in the summer of 1940 that he would prevent the British expeditionary army from retreating to the island could not be fulfilled, nor could Hitler's demand for air supremacy over England as a precondition for the planned invasion. Furthermore, the Luftwaffe showed in the Battle of Stalingrad, in which it was unable to supply the trapped 6th Army as it had promised, and in the summer of 1944 at the beginning and during the last decisive defensive battle in Normandy, that it was no longer up to the task. It was right to speak of the tragedy of the German air force.

Despite their mighty material superiority, the enemy also had their problems in building up their air defense and bomber fleets, but, in contrast to us, they were free of internal resistance to their political and military leadership that was destructive to the armed forces. At the back of its enemies throughout the war stood an all-powerful auxiliary army in the form of the German conspiracy, which offered it everything in terms of betrayal and sabotage of its own Wehrmacht that could benefit its Allied warfare.

The German air force was hit most disastrously by the active conspirator Dr. Otto John, who betrayed the only test facility for the V-weapon at Peenemünde to the British, who were then able to set back the development and production of this new weapon by many months with targeted bombing raids.

The effect of John's betrayal can be clearly seen in the following statement by General Eisenhower: "If the Germans had succeeded in completing and deploying

these new weapons six months earlier, the invasion of the European continent would have been extremely difficult and perhaps impossible." (David Irving, "The Secret Weapons of the Third Reich", page 10.)

On June 17, 1944, in Margival, eight kilometers north of Soissons, there was a briefing with Hitler about the invasion front, which Field Marshals von Rundstedt and Rommel had urged. When the field marshals pointed out the failure of their own air force, Hitler replied "that he had been deceived by the Luftwaffe's leadership and technology. The most diverse types had been developed side by side without arriving at a practical result." (Hans Speidel, "Invasion 1944", page 117.)

At that time it was still possible to speak of fraud on the part of the Luftwaffe, today we know that it was far more than that, namely sabotage *of* the Luftwaffe.

When the field marshals suggested using the V-weapon on the beachheads of the invasion front, Hitler had the commanding general of the V-weapon, General of Artillery Heinemann, summoned to report on the possibility of using it. The general pointed out that the V-weapon still had an unpredictable dispersion of fifteen to eighteen kilometers at the stage of development and could therefore not be used in the invasion area because of the danger to his own troops.

In the development of the V-weapon, as with other types of weapons, there were repeated setbacks and obstacles from the outset for various reasons of a technical and personnel nature, but these then assumed such proportions as a result of betrayal and sabotage that its timely and effective use at the front was no longer possible. Thus J. F. Taylor reports in his book "Der 20. Juli", page 14f., that the V-rockets could have been mass-produced since 1941 and that the improvements made in the meantime were not substantial, but that the relevant authorities in the Reich Aviation Ministry had repeatedly thwarted their entry into service. Technical errors would have been corrected within a short period of time when the advice of Professor Messerschmitt was sought, whose involvement in the preparations for the V-1 and V-2 was desperately resisted by the relevant departments of the RLM.

The Enlander David Irving writes on the sabotage of the V-weapon: "Since 1939 Hitler had pushed ahead with the new strategy of war through long-range weapons and had a center of German long-range weapons built in Peenemünde, which was under the leadership of the best German technicians and scientists such as Walter Dornberger and Wernher von Braun. This development received a devastating interruption because Otto John, a member of the German resistance, had provided the Allies with detailed information about the work of atomic research and the Peenemünde research center.

600 British bombers destroyed the center of German long-range weapons on August 17, 1943, and the research and development facilities, which had cost almost half a billion Reichsmarks, were in flames. More than 700 engineers, technicians, scientists and workers were killed. The start of the German V-weapons offensive was delayed just long enough to prevent the Allied invasion of Normandy, which began ten months later." (David Irving, "The Secret Weapons of the Third Reich", page 8f.)

The extent of John's betrayal of the British can be seen from the report that the British Colonel Daniel Shapiro M. C. submitted to "Stern" for publication on August 8, 1954, shortly after
Dr. Otto John had disappeared to East Berlin. During the war, the British colonel was Otto John's advisor in London alongside Sefton Delmer, who, as is well known, led the subversion propaganda against Germany with the help of around 300 German traitors (mainly emigrants). He reports:

"At first he was introduced to me as OskarJürgens. I couldn't imagine anything under that name... It was only when this Mr. Oskar Jürgens came to talk about Peenemünde without any context that I pricked up my ears.... But I still didn't understand. I simply wasn't prepared to suddenly be sitting opposite the man who had given us Peenemünde and its mysterious testing facility for wonder weapons. After all, it was a big deal, and up until then it was the greatest success of our intelligence service. I remember it very clearly: the report came from Berlin, from well-informed air force circles. It had come to us via Spain, whereupon the RAF first sent 'Moskito' reconnaissance aircraft to Peenemünde and soon afterwards600 bombers. And the man we had to thank for all this was now sitting in my office with badly dyed hair.... That was the beginning of my acquaintance with Dr. Ottojohn, who had been given the code name 'Oskarjürgens'. He remained in my care for the next few weeks. I accommodated him in Knightsbridge in one of our so-called permanent houses. That was the rule, and no exception could be made for Ottojohn, despite all the recognition of his merits. I hope, however, that he felt at home with us. The villa was comfortable, and outwardly there was nothing to distinguish it from the staid, middle-class villas in the neighborhood. The staff were dressed in civilian clothes and carried out the surveillance unobtrusively and discreetly. There were certainly not many houses in the whole of London at that time where the cooking was better than here. And if we had kept a guest book, Ottojohn could have signed in under prominent names."

Erich Kern wrote the following about Dr. Ottojohn in his documentary "How Germany was betrayed", page 24ff:

"Today, Dr. O ttojohn knows nothing of his war-deciding betrayal of the Peenemünde rocket testing facility. In his doctored memoirs 'Twice I Came Home', John does not mention Peenemünde at all.

Instead, Hans Frederik deals with this problem in great detail in his book 'The End of a Legend' and writes, among other things:

'Otto John was brought to London on December 12, 1944, accompanied by the commercial attaché of the British embassy in Lisbon, Harold Middlewaerd, on a special RAF plane. Taken over by members of

of the military defense service, he was subjected to another check there. This was merely a routine matter to which all foreigners who came to London under similar circumstances had to submit during the war. However, in Ottojohn's case, this routine check was very quickly completed, as authoritative figures such as Winston

Churchill, Lord Vansittart, Sir Ivone Kirkpatrick and the Bishop of Chichester were waiting for his reports.

In the wartime London to which John was flown, there were a huge number of German political émigrés who had the same motto as Otto John: "Against Hitler - for Germany "1. However, they were worse off. They were either interned or degraded to political passivity. Only a very small circle managed to break out of this barrage of "enemy evaluation". Political cooperation was only possible for those Germans who were willing to propagate the Allied doctrines of unconditional defeat, collective guilt and the division of Germany. Otto John was one of these select few.

Early the next day, Ottojohn was taken by a military patrol to Kensington Palace Gardens4 ... There Ottojohn had to undergo a detailed interrogation by various special officers. The complex of questions by no means only covered the events of the failed July 20, because Ottojohn's special reports, which were received from Madrid and Lisbon in London, already covered a considerable amount of intelligence content.

These interrogation results, supplemented by written reports written again by Ottojohn in London, were interesting enough for Prime Minister Winston ChuIrchill to listen attentively to an oral report by Ottojohn for a few more hours. . .'

Frederik also carefully records what John revealed and how he was recommended by Prince Louis Ferdinand:

'When the game began for Ottojohn in Madrid in March 1942, it was Prince Louis Ferdinand's recommendations that gained him entrance to the British and American chargé d'affaires in Madrid viajuan Terrazza. When he was able to pay a visit to the American chargé d'affaires, Villard Beaulaque, and subsequently also to the British, it was on behalf of the 'Abwehr4. His targeted information, which he had received directly from Beck, Hammerstein and Oster for this purpose, did not fail to have an effect . . .

In November 1943, he appeared in Madrid again. The military attaché at the American embassy there, Colonel Hohenthal, received him for confidential talks. Hohenthal had previously worked as a military attaché at the American embassy in Berlin and was therefore no stranger tojohn.

no stranger tojohn. At the time, the contact had been established by the American journalist Louis Lochner.

The return journey took place on December 16. Otto John wrote a detailed report for Colonel Hansen and Colonel von Stauffenberg about his meetings with Beaulaque and Colonel Hohenthal.

His new interlocutor was struck by Otto John's excellent knowledge of military technology. He was very well informed about the status of developments in nuclear research and nuclear weapons in Germany. He obtained his information from the first circles. Facts from the so-called Uranium Association were particularly important. This group of around a dozen scientists, chaired by Nobel Prize winner Heisenberg, was working on plans for an atomic bomb. In the fall of 1943, Otto

John was able to report in Madrid that although the production of an atomic bomb was ready on paper, it was not possible to manufacture it for technical reasons. At the same time, it was also possible to report on the status of the V-l and V-2 weapon project in Peenemünde. . .

Ottojohn also tried to obtain real information from his contacts about the Allies' position on the issue of unconditional surrender. His sources in London and Washington gave him the following idea: the Allies were unlikely to make concessions in terms of unconditional surrender. The Russians were expected to invade Germany soon, and the British and Americans would make no special effort to get to Berlin before the Russians. It is felt that Germany deserves to be punished, and the Western Allies prefer to leave that to the Russians." (Hans Frederik, "The End of a Legend", page 53 ff.)

Of particular importance is Frederik's above report regarding the conspirator Otto John's precise knowledge of the state of development of atomic research and an atomic bomb in Germany. The group of "about a dozen scientists" chaired by Heisenberg included the son of the conspirator Emst von Weizsäcker, Professor Carl-Friedrich von Weizsäcker, whose work within Heisenberg's research group is described in more detail in the next section.

The fact that the Hohenzollern Prince Louis Ferdinand abetted Otto John's treason in 1942, i.e. during the war, by giving it access to the British and American chargés d'affaires in Madrid, is a very sad and depressing event for many German patriots who admire the Prussian kings above all else. Prince Louis Ferdinand was in contact with Dr. Goerdeler through Otto John, whom he called his friend,
came into contact with Dr. Goerdeler. Despite his willingness to testify, Goerdeler did not reveal the Prince's name during his interrogation by the Secret State Police after July 20, 1944.

The authors Heinrich Fraenkel and Roger Manvell confirm Prince Louis Ferdinand's membership of the resistance in their book "Der 20. Juli", page 40, by writing: "Meetings were held in private homes everywhere - for example at Klaus Bonhoeffer's house. The circle of debaters included Hassell, Beck, Leuschner and even Prince Louis Ferdinand, the crown prince's second son."

In the same document, page 227ff., a report by Ottojohn is reproduced in which it says, among other things: "On June 19, 1944, I flew from Berlin to Madrid. Stauffenberg had asked me to find out through my connection to the American military attaché in Madrid whether and what possibilities existed for negotiating an armistice with Eisenhower in the event of a successful coup d'état against Hitler. It was Stauffenberg's intention to have the armistice negotiations conducted, as he put it, 'from soldier to soldier1 , eliminating all civilians and politicians. I myself was to remain in Madrid and await the assassination attempt and the arrival of Hansen.

Contrary to this original agreement, I received a coded radio message on July 14 - Hansen had established a special radio operator in Madrid for this purpose - that I was to come to Berlin immediately I te On the evening of July 19, I landed at Tempelhof airfield. ... On July 20, between five and six o'clock in the afternoon,

Haeften called me and said: "Come here! We're going to enforce the law!1. .

On Monday, July 24, I boarded the scheduled Lufthansa plane to Madrid in Tempelhof. The Gestapo officers checking the passengers greeted me, as always, in a friendly manner: "Have a good flight, Doctor!"*.

He was not yet recognized as a conspirator and, as a Lufthansa syndic in possession of a passport authorized by Admiral Canaris' Abwehr, he could fly abroad on a Lufthansa plane at any time.

The V-weapon was constantly sabotaged during its development and testing, as engineer Gerhard Frank from Kierling (Austria) reports, who as commander of a V-l launching pad was responsible for preparing the launch of the wing bombs.

Like his comrades in the same operation, he had to experience repeatedly that, among other things, parts of the automatic course control system had been sabotaged. "The thin pneumatic hoses for the

"The thin pneumatic hoses for adjusting the compass and rudder," he reports verbatim, "were punctured in places that were difficult to access. This resulted in early crashes of our projectiles, often into our own lines, into circles or even return flights, which sometimes caused heavy losses in our own area. Losses not only in our own ranks, but also among the civilian population of the occupied territories. In such cases, the blame was naturally placed on the German soldiers, thus poisoning the atmosphere. I myself experienced such a concrete case when a Kreislaufer crashed into a small Dutch town.

As far as we knew at the time, V-l shells were mostly assembled by concentration camp prisoners. There is no question that there was sufficient desire and opportunity for sabotage. However, the acceptance inspections at the production sites were undoubtedly carried out by their own officials. To what extent acceptance inspections were carried out negligently or the sabotage was even carried out by political opponents among the inspectors can hardly be answered today. Unfortunately, given the catastrophic extent of betrayal and sabotage in the last war, the latter possibility cannot be dismissed out of hand." (Report from engineer Gerhard Frank dated May 20, 1972 to the author.)

The fact that the entire Luftwaffe was exposed to betrayal and sabotage from within the ranks of the Reich Aviation Ministry (RLM) in its planning, development and production is explained not only by Ottojohn and his helpers, but also by the fact that the "Rote Kapelle", the largest pro-communist agent organization within the Reich, had its headquarters in the RLM. Although most of those involved were arrested and sentenced by the Reich Court, many were not caught because the investigations were mainly carried out by Admiral Canaris' Foreign Counterintelligence Office.

The Inspector General of the Luftwaffe, Field Marshal Milch, had already seen through Canaris at the time and gave the appropriate instructions in a meeting with his chiefs of staff on October 21, 1942:

",Screening only serves a purpose if it is done by the Gestapo. It is pointless if it is carried out by the Abwehr. I would like to make this expressly known. And he

added: 'I forbid any kind of screening by the Abwehr; any screening must be done by the Gestapo, because otherwise we have no guarantee that it will be a successful screening. When he saw the curious faces around the table, he continued: 'I can't say why. I have specific reasons and evidence for this ... .'

At this conference, Milch also told his colleagues about the 'Red Chapel': 'There is a circle of people involved in this matter, i.e. in
absolutely proven treason, which is five times as large as the people sitting around this table. Not a single worker is involved. But instead, gentlemen, the high nobility and relatives are represented up to half the time, people who could be trusted to be fiercely reactionary and loyal to the Kaiser, who could never be trusted to collaborate with the Communists, to betray their own fatherland to the Communists.1" (David Irving, "The Tragedy of the German Air Force", page 246.)

One sector of German armaments that had an increasingly decisive influence on the course of the war was the radar system, the radio measurement technology. In his war book "Zu spät?" (Too late?), General Werner Baumbach, a fighter pilot, explains the extent to which the Luftwaffe, as well as the Kriegsmarine, was in disarray despite the outstanding basic research of our scientists:

"The new developments in radar technology fared not much differently than the rockets. The importance of high frequency for modern defensive and offensive weapons was only given greater attention by the German leadership from 1943 onwards. The first years of the war had shown the influence that radio measurement technology could have on the course of military operations. The Battle of Britain* had failed due to the close-meshed and well-organized radar detection of the British. The submarine war had been paralyzed as a result of the installation of radar equipment on the Allied ships and with the help of their radar patrol aircraft. . .

For military applications, an umbrella organization should have been created in good time to coordinate research, development, requirements and procurement. This did not happen, at least on paper, until January 1, 1944, when a Reich Research Council was established. Until then, each branch of the Wehrmacht had worked on its own without having to share its experiences ... .

When Göring asked on May 2, 1943, who was actually responsible for the radio measurement industry, Milch and Martini (General, Head of the Foreign Air Forces Group in the Luftwaffe High Command, the author) both answered in the negative. Göring decided that Milch was now in charge. Martini, however, remained in charge of implementation.

Research within the Luftwaffe had also been concentrated on a special representative, State Councillor Plendl, who listened little to other researchers. As a result, Plendl did not correctly assess the British procedures. He did not realize that the Western powers were now using new methods that were extremely resistant to interference. It turned out that the German scientists had almost always been active in the field in question earlier than their Western opponents. The responsible
However, those responsible in industry and the Wehrmacht had rarely pursued their own methods in good time and had often rejected promising equipment

developments with which the enemy then appeared. Fundamental and pioneering findings that did not offer an optimal solution were rejected as technically immature.

On March 18, 1943, Göring complained about the state of German radio measurement technology with the following words: "By far the worst is in the field of radio measurement. Here it is desperate! Of course, one must clearly admit that the British and Americans are far, far above us. I took that into account from the outset, and it had always been clear. But frankly, I didn't expect them to be so far ahead of us. I at least hoped that, even if we were behind, we would at least be able to keep up to some extent." (Werner Baumbach, "Too late?", page 262f.)

If one knows that the people initially responsible for the development of the means of communication and radio measurement technology, Admiral Canaris, Lieutenant General Fritz Thiele, head of the Wehrmacht intelligence service, and General of the intelligence troops Erich Fellgiebel, were active conspirators, the question of why the highly qualified forces of research and technology were not coordinated and utilized in good time becomes superfluous.

When Milch learned in late summer that the British night bombers were emitting clouds of the finest aluminum dust to jam the "Lichtenstein" on-board radar system of the German night fighters, his experts informed him that the enemy could take out the entire German air defense if he further developed the jamming method against the Luftwaffe's radio measuring systems. They pointed out to Milch: "If he (the Englishman) lets such clouds, which stay in the air for about 20 to 30 minutes, trickle down over a large urban area, then the Würzburg measurement (German radar early warning and defense system, the author) is not very promising at the moment . . .

When Milch demanded an extensive jamming campaign against the British radar in January 1943, he was told that General Martini, who was responsible for these matters, was against any jamming and demanded that "all attempts of this kind to interfere with the enemy's radio measuring system be refrained from under all circumstances for the time being, because there is a simple means of interfering with the entire radio measuring system in our country as well, and we have no antidote".

Over the next six months, he did not undertake any research into the development of an antidote. When the British used their "Window" method (jamming method using tin foil strips, author's note) for the first time - during the mass attacks on Hamburg in July - the German radar system was paralyzed, as had been predicted.
was paralyzed, as had been predicted. Only now did Martini begin researching countermeasures." (David Irving, "The Tragedy of the German Air Force", page 284.)

On the night of July 25, 1943, seven hundred heavy bombers attacked the port and city of Hamburg, first dropping cascades of 25-centimeter-long strips of tin foil into the sky to disrupt our anti-aircraft and fighter control radio equipment. "While

the searchlights were aimlessly fingering over Hamburg's sky and the blinded night fighters were cruising around in the darkness, the bombers killed 1500 people and devastated a large part of the city. Only twelve bombers were shot down. Measures against the dreaded metal strips had still not been developed. The next morning, 100 American bombers attacked to disrupt firefighting, and in the evening the British bombed Essen with 600 planes. . .

On the evening of July 27, HambuIrg took another huge blow. Covered again in tin foil strips, the bombers dropped 2300 tons of explosive and incendiary bombs over the city. Huge wildfires broke out. The main water pipes had been destroyed in the previous raids, and soon the fires swept over the city with terrible speed; tens of thousands of inhabitants were drawn into the inferno by the artificial hurricane created by the wildfires, which raged through the streets as a 'firestorm', burned to death in the huge concrete air-raid shelters or were poisoned by carbon monoxide. 50,000 people died." (David Irving, "The Tragedy of the German Air Force", page 298.)

Three months after the catastrophe in Hamburg, the problem of overcoming the tinfoil strip disruption had still not been solved, although dozens of scientists were working on it. In the second half of October 1943, 1700 tons of bombs were dropped on Hanover and 1100 tons on Leipzig.

At a conference on October 8, 1943, Göring rancorously admitted his admiration for British electronic devices: "He must be a world genius in the field of radio measurement. He has geniuses and we have geniuses... The British would never have brought the DIüppel (code name for tin foil strips, the author) here if they didn't have one hundred percent interference suppression."

Göring was also astonished by the performance of the British homing devices: "There may or may not be fog here: the Englishman finds the smallest dirt mill here. He flies above the clouds and drops points on the Stuttgart railroad station___GeIstern1istterIbissMünch:enio without£any ground visibility!" He turned to General Martini, the chief of air intelligence, and said: "Perhaps you forgot to jam?"

"He probably has a new frequency," stammered Martini, a man who was blushing slightly. "A frequency that can't be jammed at the moment." "Martini," shouted Göring, "you're very lucky that you don't have to lecture the Führer, only me. The Führer would probably not listen for so long." (David Irving, "The Tragedy of the German Luftwaffe", page 32 lf.)

The methods used to sabotage the development and deployment of new radar equipment and weapons are shown in the following two reports.

In May 1970, the magazine "Nation Europa" published an article by Otto Gerber describing the following experience:

"In1934, I was appointed to the staff of the Führer's deputy (later the Party Chancellery) in Munich in the Brown House and entrusted with the processing of complaints and requests of all kinds. In cooperation with the party offices, I was in charge of processing applications for work, applications for the allocation of

housing and applications for help in emergency situations through no fault of my own.

Around the middle of 1944, an engineer (name known to the editor) was reported to me for an interview. After dealing with a personal matter - finding a place to live for his wife, who had fled from Danzig - Mr. K. moved his chair closer to my desk and told me the following: 'I have been summoned here with several colleagues from the Ministry of Aviation. We work under the designation 'BAL 44', i.e. 'Construction Supervision of the Air Force 1944'. Our task is to supervise the production of material and weapons for the Luftwaffe. The 'BAL' is deployed throughout the Reich because more and more faulty material and weapons are being delivered. We have strict orders not to talk about our task and our actions. I would also have to remain silent towards you. But for reasons of conscience I feel compelled to present the following to you with the request that the Party remedy the situation.

Then K. continued: 'It's about the construction of the radar device R 558. Work has been going on for three weeks on the test piece (BMW company) and it's not progressing, it's simply not being finished. We from 'BAL 44' have complained about this to the plant management and have therefore got into trouble with them. We were told by the management of the BMW plant: "The speed of production is none of your business!" In my opinion, only the party can help. That's why I'm here."

I passed the complaint on to the Führer's headquarters as a "secret Reich matter". From there it came back to the responsible Department II Ab of the Party Chancellery for further processing with the highest military service offices. I was involved by co-signing and thus learned that a negotiation date (in Berlin) had been set.
(in Berlin) had been scheduled, to which SS Gruppenführer Kammler was invited in addition to the representatives of the Wehrmacht.

After some time, Engineer K. returned to my office to obtain information about the status of the case. When he heard from me that the matter was being handled by the Speer Ministry, he declared indignantly: 'For God's sake, how can you give this matter to Speer! I came to you so that the party would finally intervene! You know, the radar device is the same one of which Dr. Goebbels had already said in 1942 - this year he literally shouted into the room: "You hold your breath once you have experienced the effect of the device."

As Mr. K. went on to say, this device had already been used in a night raid over Schweinfurt, and 140 four-engine bombers were shot down that night. Mr. K. continued excitedly: 'In the meantime, however, one large city after another is being bombed to rubble and nothing is happening. We experts - we have, among others, a famous specialist for vibrations from the Ruhr area in our group - are not allowed to get involved and are not listened to at all."

I immediately passed this conversation on as a file note to the responsible Department II.

After some time, Mr. K. came to see me again. Normally he had always tried to speak calmly and with an authoritative smile, but now there were sparks of scorn in his eyes: "Now we've been completely paralyzed. According to the latest company regulations, all our engineers have to wear uniforms. They are members of the air force and have the highest rank of Oberwachtmeister. This means that we technical specialists are subordinate in disciplinary terms to the young lieutenant in charge of the operation. That's the end of any freedom of action."

At the beginning of 1945, Mr. K. came to see me again and said the following: "To round things off, I bring you the news that the perfectly tested and proven equipment for shooting down airplanes is now being converted to higher orders."- As he said, there should have been 2000 E 558 devices in Munich-Allach (BMW). Some of them were camouflaged and stored in the woods near Munich in the spring of 1945. But immediately after the relocation, the very next night, the individual sections of forest where the devices were stored were bombed."

Rolf Hillebrand reported on the following act of sabotage, in which the conspirator General Fellgiebel played his part, in the "Reichs- r1u f of December 14, 1957. Hillebrand was production manager on the staff of Femseh GmbH, which from 1939 united all branches of research in the field of television technology and which was relocated 75 percent to the USSR in 1945 by Soviet Marshal Konjew. Hillebrand writes:

"It was towards the end of the Korean War that the US army command announced that an American secret weapon had been used on a trial basis. It was said that it could be used to observe any target at a distance of many kilometers during firing and that the already released projectile could be deflected at will during flight in response to any target shift. The results were outstanding. This American invention, the announcement concluded, was the most important in recent years in the field of war technology and its effects could not be overlooked.

When I read this announcement, which was shrouded in a veil of impenetrable secrecy by the press, I couldn't help but smile quietly, albeit bitterly. The secret was not so impenetrable to me, since this new weapon was not an American invention at all, but a German one, in the development and production of which I had been closely involved during the Second World War. And if the criminal treason of the Reich had not been so incredibly widespread in the key positions, this weapon, as well as a number of other secret weapons, would have been used by the Germans by 1944 at the latest. And not only in 1952 by the Americans.

This German secret weapon - we called it "Tonne" - was probably one of the most groundbreaking German research achievements in the technical field ... In August 1943, the company Hentschel Flugzeugwerke had developed a missile with short wing stubs, which was to be loaded with explosives, attached to the fuselage of a mother plane and used to sink ships. These already existing cigar-shaped cells were to be fitted with television equipment and a remote control system - that was our brief. That was the birth of the "ton"... Our often-derided "basic research" provided the guarantee that individual development paths that had to be taken could fall back on the necessary foundations at any time. This principle also proved to be particularly beneficial in our case.

The working principle of our "ton" was to be as follows: The missile was attached to the fuselage of a carrier aircraft like a heavy bomb. In the head of the missile, before the explosive charge, there was a television recording device. This recorded the target and its surroundings during the approach and transmitted the images to a television screen inside the aircraft. A second receiver was located in the airport and served as a control device and as a backup in the event that the receiver in the aircraft should fail. A remote control system was located under the television screen. Once the enemy target had been sighted, the pilot released the "barrel", which then flew on with the help of its own engine.

the aircraft's own engine, while the carrier aircraft turned towards its home port.

On the television screen, it was now possible to follow exactly the further flight of the "barrel" and its relationship to the controlled target object. Every change of course - for example due to the effect of the wind - of the wing bomb could be regulated by the remote control system, every breakout of the target object from the target line was visible on the screen and could be compensated for by controlling the "ton" again. In order to keep the image consistently sharp while the "ton" continued to fly, a new lens with a different focal length was automatically moved in front of the camera after a certain flight time. In this way, the hit had to be infallible.

Even if the previous path of our research institutes had been hard and full of privation, what happened now surpassed everything that had been imaginable up to that point. For weeks on end, the trials at the test sites in Karlshagen, Jesan, Neu-Mecklenburg, Röchlin and Mannzell went on non-stop - the aim was to eliminate the teething troubles and make the "Tonne" ready for use. . . Since March 1944 - we had been relocated to the Sudetenland in the meantime - we had been constantly trying to get an air group assigned for practical testing of the "Tonne" in front-line operations. However, we came up against a bewildering wall of inaction. Finally, in June, a squadron was assigned to deploy the "Tonne" to the Adriatic. We eagerly awaited what was to come. But we continued to wait in vain for a deployment order.

Inexplicably, the delivery of the special multi-functional plug, which provided the connection of the cables in the machines, was also delayed. Thousands of these multiple plugs were waiting in Berlin-Straußberg. When a number of "tons" were suddenly requested for an operation planned within six days and delivery was ordered directly to the port of operation under the highest level of urgency, we chased special couriers directly from us to Berlin to procure the plugs; they returned empty-handed: the depot was under the control of a high Wehrmacht officer who refused to hand them over. Telexes and phone calls chased each other through the night to Berlin, we were in despair. Finally, in the morning, a concrete message arrived: the head of the Wehrmacht intelligence service, General Fellgiebel, was on his way to us. We breathed a sigh of relief. Scientists and technicians, who had been working non-stop for weeks on the completion and testing and were only able to keep themselves on their feet with chemical tonics, drew new hope: in the end, everything would work out!

The situation is described to the General of the Intelligence Troops who arrives to inspect the factory. We ask him, in view of the urgency

We asked him to personally arrange for the release of the required plugs, given the urgency of the situation. The general remains outwardly obliging, but does not commit himself. When he wants to leave the factory again after four hours of trivial discussions, I stand in his way and politely ask for the necessary signature. 'I have more important things to do now' is his laconic reply. I refer to the experimental missions of the 'Tonne', which give rise to the greatest hope, I refer to the forthcoming mission, which has been ordered by the Führer's headquarters with the utmost urgency and the code number for a special mission, I refer to the

insignificance of the formality of a single signature As a matter of principle, I do not issue signatures outside my office. Come to my office in Berlin in eight days' time tomorrow. We will then see what can be done. Besides, the war will go on for a long time and you won't be too late! He leaves me standing there without a greeting and drives off in his car. . .

Shortly afterwards, the equipment was taken away. Not to the Adriatic - to a storage room in Klein-Machnow. I found them there again in November 1945. The Russians had discovered them, mistaken them for radios, turned them - and when no music sounded, they simply doused them with gasoline and set them on fire. General of the intelligence troops Erich Fellgiebel, however, was executed on September 4, 1944 for his involvement in the July 20 assassination attempt."

Sabotage in the development of a German atomic bomb

There is almost no conceivable sabotage of the German war effort in which members of the conspiracy did not at least indirectly participate or have an influence.

In his 1967 publication "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", the English author David Irving gives a detailed and authentic account of the research and development work carried out by our atomic scientists during the war, which was initiated by the German professor Otto Hahn with his sensational discovery of uranium fission at the end of 1938. David Irving's report is authentic because it is based not only on the documents of the British and American secret services, but also largely on statements by German nuclear physicists and chemists.

"How different history would have been," writes Irving in his publication on page 30f., "if the war had broken out in the fall of 1938, as seemed almost possible at the time. Would Hahn have published his discovery at all? Would the United States have been able to reach the same stage with its atomic bomb by 1945? Perhaps the United States could never have brought the atomic weapon to such horrific perfection as long as the secret had remained solely in German hands."

Dr. Paul Rosbaud, editor of the German scientific journal "Naturwissenschaften" and close friend of Professor Hahn, published the essay by Hahn and his colleague Dr. Fritz Straßmann, in which they proved "that the uranium core had burst* only a few moments earlier... The significance was immediately clear to Rosbaud, the next issue of Naturwissenschaften* was already set, but Rosbaud ordered that another essay of lesser weight be taken out and Hahn and Strassmann's paper indented in its

place; it bore the date of that day - December 22, 1938. That was the turning point of the sun: the winter of the world had begun." (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb" page 28.)

According to Irving, on page 198 of the same work, Dr. Rosbaud is "the German scientist and traitor". As we will see below, he betrayed all stages of German nuclear research as well as the events surrounding the heavy water plant in Vermork (southern Norway), which was severely damaged by an English-Norwegian sabotage attack, to the British secret service.

Professor Otto Hahn, Director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Chemistry during the war, was a close friend of the Austrian Dr. Lise Meitner, with whom he had to part ways in 1938 after 30 years of collaboration in the field of nuclear research because of her Jewish descent, when Austria was united with the German Reich. Despite being banned from leaving the country, she was able to emigrate to Sweden with the help of Hahn and other friends. Her nephew Dr. Otto Frisch, also a nuclear researcher, worked with the world-famous scientist Niels Bohr in his Copenhagen laboratory.

In Sweden, where she spent Christmas with her nephew Frisch, Lise Meitner received a letter from Professor Hahn about his discovery, the consequences of which were soon clear to both of them. While Lise Meitner returned to Stockholm, Dr. Otto Frisch travelled back to Copenhagen, where he told Niels Bohr, who was half-Jewish, about Hahn's discovery, "he also explained to Bohr what conclusions he and his aunt had reached with regard to the quantities of energy released. Shortly afterwards, Bohr traveled to the United States
States, where he stayed for several months. The secret traveled with him across the Atlantic". (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 31.)

On January 26, 1939, Niels Bohr reported on Otto Hahn's discovery and the resulting release of enormous energies at the Conference on Theoretical Physics in Washington. Two days after Bohr's lecture, Otto Hahn and Fritz Straßmann published a second article in the Berlin journal "Naturwissenschaften" entitled "Nachweis weiterer aktiver Bruchstücke" ("Proof of further active fragments"), which were produced during uranium fission. In this article, which hit the world of physics like a bomb, the two nuclear chemists explained the chain reaction (avalanche effect) that takes place during the nuclear fission of uranium, through which previously undreamt-of amounts of energy are released.

In his memoirs "My Life", Professor Hahn himself gives a vivid, generally understandable explanation of his discovery of the fission of the uranium nucleus in the following dialog with Dr. Herbert Schräder as the questioner:

"Question: .In those December days of 1938, did you even think for a second about keeping your experimental results secret ?'

Professor Hahn: 'No, never.

Question: 'It was later claimed that you would have preferred to withdraw the communication?

Professor Hahn: 'That's what Robert Jungk claimed in his book "Brighter than a

Thousand Suns". But that is a mistake, because I was glad that we were able to publish the work so quickly.

Question: 'Did you overlook the consequences of the fissility of uranium nuclei at the time?

Professor Hahn: 'We only knew that we had done good chemical work. But of course we didn't realize the consequences to the same extent. We knew that irradiating uranium with neutrons would split the nucleus. But we had no idea that some superfluous neutrons would be released from the nucleus as a side reaction.

Question: 'Under certain circumstances, these superfluous neutrons can hit other uranium nuclei and split them too. You didn't know about this chain reaction?

Professor Hahn: 'No, the chain reaction was only discovered later. This then led to the practical exploitation of nuclear energy. The physicists dealt with that, while Straßmann and I were interested in the chemical problems. We were only concerned with the many conversion products that are released during fission.

Question: 'The starting point of your work was the search for trans
uranium, the elements that are heavier than uranium. However, you did not produce transuranium elements, but discovered nuclear fission. It was only later that the real transuranium elements, including the important plutonium, were produced in the United States. Why didn't you find a real transuranium yourself?'

Professor Hahn: 'We missed out on a Nobel Prize. We had a uranium isotope with a half-life of 23 minutes in our hands.

Question: 'Half-life means that half of the substance was converted back into other substances within 23 minutes, right?

Professor Hahn: Yes, and element 93 is formed from this uranium isotope, but it wasn't us who discovered this, but the Americans McMillan and Abelson at the cyclotron in Berkeley. They were awarded the Nobel Prize for it.

Question: 'But you, Professor Hahn, were awarded the Nobel Prize for your work, albeit not for the discovery of a transuranium. So you were lucky in misfortune or unlucky in luck, if you like.

Professor Hahn: 'That's right. And we're not sad about it. But it is an interesting episode. [1]'" (Otto Hahn, "My Life", page 166ff.)

Carl-Friedrich Freiherr von Weizsäcker was one of the group of German nuclear physicists around Professor Werner Heisenberg who were theoretically and experimentally involved in the use of nuclear energy during the war. According to Irving in "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 39, he was "a young (27) but outstanding philosopher and physicist who had published a famous theory on the transformation of the elements in the stars... He was not a National Socialist, but his father's (the conspirator Emst von Weizsäcker, the author) position as State Secretary in Ribbentrop's Foreign Office inevitably made him more sensitive to politics than the other scientists."

The nature of Carl-Friedrich von Weizsäcker's political sensitivity is made unmistakably clear by Irving, where he reports in his book on the conversation of the group around Professor Hahn and Professor Heisenberg, who learned of the

dropping of the first atomic bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima in English captivity in Farm Hall on August 6, 1945. In addition to Hahn and Heisenberg, this group included: Dr. Erich Bagge, Dr. Kurt Diebner, Professor Walter Gerlach, Professor Paul Harteck, Dr. Horst Korsching, Professor Max von Laue, Professor Carl-Friedrich von Weizsäcker and Dr. Karl Wirtz.

"In the hours that followed the news broadcast," Irving reports, "the discussion became increasingly acrimonious. Dr. Korsching said that the Americans had obviously cooperated to a very considerable extent. 'That would have been impossible in Germany. Everyone said
I think the reason why we didn't do it is that all physicists didn't want to do it, basically not,' von Weizsäcker claimed. And he added: '*If we had all wanted Germany to win the war, then we could have succeeded.*

That upset more than one of the others. Had the German uranium project been sabotaged by them? One of the physicists wrote shortly afterwards: 'In the meantime, we in Germany . . that some of our leading men took a somewhat negative view of isotope separation and tolerated it only marginally, indeed, we had to experience that isotope separation work had to be pushed through, so to speak, against the internal resistance of our own best physicists, but we also had to watch as people like M, E, W and P did not lift a finger for the purification of 235 or were too incapable of achieving it. That's a hard thing!

Professor Gerlach - who had been Reich Marshal Göring's plenipotentiary for nuclear physics since the beginning of 1944 - was most distressed by the German failure. And Dr. Bagge said: 'I think it is absurd for von Weizsäcker to declare that he did not want the work to succeed: That may be true for his case, but not for all of us.'" (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 16f.)

The physicist on the panel who wrote the above after the discussion could presumably have been Professor Paul Harteck, who as a young researcher was one of the most successful nuclear physicists on the above-mentioned panel, and of impeccable character. On April 24, 1939, he and his assistant, Dr. Wilhelm Groth, wrote to the Reich Ministry of War and explained that the latest developments in the field of nuclear physics would probably make it possible to produce an explosive that was many orders of magnitude more powerful than all conventional explosives.

After explaining the work of Hahn and Straßmann and pointing out the discovery of the Frenchman Fredericjoliots as a result of the uranium fission discovered by Hahn, they pointed out "that in America and England great importance is attached to research in nuclear physics, while the field is neglected in Germany. One thing was obvious, however: 'The country that is the first to make use of it has an unassailable superiority over the others. Professor Harteck's name will appear again and again in the following report. He was the driving force behind much of the most far-sighted research into the German atomic project during the war years." (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 36 f.)

When, in September 1939, the Army Ordnance Office wanted to take over the building of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Physics in Dahlem with its excellent

equipment and use it as a new center for the nuclear physics research group in order to create a central institute for all the scientists involved in the proposed general program, the plan was shattered due to the selfishness of almost all the researchers. This dilemma was compounded by the negative attitude of a number of physicists who saw their collaboration on the new project of harnessing nuclear fission for war purposes primarily as a way of avoiding military service. No wonder that the physicist Carl-Friedrich von Weizsäcker, son of the conspirator Emst von Weizsäcker, was one of them, as Irving reveals in the following words on page 51 of his book: "And as one of the young physicists concerned, von Weizsäcker admits that he accepted the orders for military research in 1939 from the Army Ordnance Office because his other research would not have exempted him from military service."

In Irving's opinion, there can have been no lack of support from the government. "When Speer (Armaments Minister, the author) asked Heisenberg and von Weizsäcker in June 1942 how he could best help them, the two complained that they were making no progress because they were not getting the necessary building material allocations; but when he asked how much money they needed, von Weizsäcker hesitantly spoke of an amount of 40000 RM. Field Marshal Milch remembers: "It was such a ridiculous figure that Speer looked at me and we both shook our heads at the unworldliness and naivety of these people. Speer says today: 'I had already come up with a figure of 100 million RM when von Weizsäcker's reply came. ' Dr. Vogler (then head of the Kaiser Wilhelm Society, the author) was terribly embarrassed by this faux pas; he left the conference together with Speer and had an extremely negative impression of the whole uranium project. Speer told the scientists they could have any amount they asked for - but after that he didn't care much about the Kem project.

The scientists in question would now like to explain that this was their intention - that they had no desire to work on a uranium bomb. Heisenberg certainly succeeded in making it clear to his listeners that the production of such a weapon in Germany was almost impossible, but he admits that he and his colleagues had overestimated the actual difficulties of producing the necessary fissile material during the war. That is why they never made a serious effort to draw attention to the possibility that atomic bombs could be made." (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 303 f.)

By contrast, what was the situation in America with regard to the research of physicists there into nuclear fission after Hahn's discovery became known? According to Irving's report, it was the Jewish emigrants from the Axis countries who were most active in making the Americans aware of the danger of German nuclear research. The five scientists who are described as the initiators of the American project to develop an atomic bomb all came from abroad and were called Szilard, Wigner, Teller, Weisskopf and Fermi. All were Jews except Enrico Fermi from Italy, whose wife was Jewish.

On March 17, Fermi had a conversation with officials from the Department of the

Navy in Washington, to whom he tried above all to explain the danger that would have to arise from the possession of nuclear weapons in German hands. However, as these officials reacted calmly and completely unshaken, Fermi turned to Albert Einstein who, in a letter dated August 2, 1939 and in a second letter dated March 7, 1940 to President Roosevelt, urgently warned of the danger threatening from Germany. His second letter stated:

"Since the outbreak of the war, interest in uranium has increased in Germany. I have now learned that the research there is being carried out in great secrecy and has been extended to another of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institutes, the Institute of Physics. The latter has been taken over by the government and a group of physicists under the direction of C. F. von Weizsäcker, who is now working there on uranium in cooperation with the Institute of Chemistry. The former director was sent away on leave, apparently for the duration of the war."

There can be little doubt that it was this "former director", Dr. Debye, who had triggered the psychosis over uranium research at the Kaiser-Wiilheim Institute in Dahlem. Debye finally arrived in America at the end of April; he privately told journalists about the circumstances of his departure from Dahlem. The authorities had informed him that his laboratory was being used for "other purposes"; he had made discreet inquiries and learned that a large part of the institute was being used for uranium research. The result of his revelations was a very long article in the "New York Times" a few days later, which reported in tones of highly exaggerated alarm that in Germany every available physicist, chemist and engineer had been ordered to "leave all other work and devote himself exclusively to this work. All these researchers, it was learned, are feverishly carrying out their tasks in the laboratories of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute in Berlin." (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 67 ff.)

If this had really been the case, if the German researchers had really worked feverishly for the interests of their country and people, the
German warfare could have congratulated itself! Unfortunately, this was not the case here, as everywhere else where the conspiracy had a hand in it.

"Most remarkable under Gerlach's new rule was the concentration during the war on scientific fields of research that could have no significance at all for the outcome of the war: He saw to it that those groups in Berlin and Dahlem were provided with equipment to work on remote problems of nuclear physics - on the determination of nuclear magnetic moments and spectra, on the specific heat and thermal expansion coefficient of uranium metal and similar problems. Although the original shortage of cyclotrons in Germany had now been remedied - first by the completion of Joliot's cyclotron in Paris and then by the device in Heidelberg, which had just been brought up to full capacity - Gerlach did not intend to use this equipment for military research, as the Americans had done with such resounding success. The new radioactive isotopes produced by these facilities were to be used for medical and biological research.

A few years earlier, the German government had spread a new slogan: 'German

science in the service of war!' But although the funds and the special privileges for the entire uranium project had been approved solely in anticipation of military benefits, Gerlach did not hesitate to use the funds for the general promotion of German science. As far as he was concerned, the new slogan could have been: 'The war in the service of German science1." (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 238f.)

But how could this sabotage of the development of a German atomic bomb be possible, given that Gerlach's plans were transparent to his staff? Well, it was possible because they knew how to keep to themselves, among equals. The following event speaks for the correctness of this explanation:

"Dr. Karl Wirtz remarked to von Weizsäcker that they suddenly had 'Nazis* in the institute - what to do about it. Wirtz himself gave the answer to his question: somehow they wanted to use intrigue to ensure that Heisenberg came to the institute; once he was there, they could certainly make him director over Diebner's head. Von Weizsäcker therefore went to Diebner's office and suggested inviting Heisenberg to join the institute as a consultant; Diebner, who suspected nothing, agreed. Von Weizsäcker immediately went to his co-conspirator Wirtz and explained to him that Diebner had not aroused any suspicion and that Heisenb i erg could come. The famous professor would continue to live with his family in Leipzig and travel to Berlin once a week.
Berlin once a week." (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 57.)

During the summer of 1942, Professor von Weizsäcker and Dr. Wutz were able to persuade the management of the Kaiser Wilhelm Society to appoint Heisenberg, who had been a scientific advisor to the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute of Physics in Berlin-Dahlem since 1940, as director of the institute on October 1, 1942. "Now at last he was completely within the influence of the two *politically aware* physicists who had landed this coup", as Irving puts it in no uncertain terms. The other scientists, who were in the loop or at least not unsuspecting, scoffed, referring to the abbreviation "WHW" of the German Winterhilfswerk: Heisenberg sandwiched between Wirtz and Weizsäcker.

There is certainly no need to point out the manner and direction in which von Weizsäcker and Wirtz understood how to exert political influence on Heisenberg, if this was necessary at all. In any case, Irving has told us so much concrete information about Professor von Weizsäcker that he must be counted among the conspirators who did not want Germany to win the war.

It can therefore be rightly assumed that Professor Heisenberg was under the particular influence of Weizsäcker and Wirtz when he decided to visit Professor Niels Bohr in Denmark at the end of October 1941, in the third year of the war, and to reveal to him the status of German research work. Irving reports:

"From September 1941 onwards," says Heisenberg today, "we actually saw a clear road to the atomic bomb ahead of us."

This was the culmination of a major debate behind the scenes in German science.

Many physicists were now driven by serious concerns as to whether it was morally justifiable to work on the uranium project - this was particularly true for Heisenberg, von Weizsäcker and Fritz Houtermans.

At the end of October, Heisenberg traveled to Denmark to visit Prof. Niels Bohr and ask him for advice on the human side of the problem. As Prof. P. Jensen aptly puts it, Heisenberg, the "high priest" of German theoretical physics, went to his pope to seek absolution. So Heisenberg asked the Danish physicist whether a physicist had the moral right to work on the problems of an atomic bomb in wartime. Bohr replied with a counter-question: whether, in Heisenberg's opinion, the military use of nuclear fission was possible. Heisenberg replied with concern that he had now realized that it was possible. Heisenberg had wanted to ask Bohr whether he thought it would be feasible for all scientists in the world to agree not to focus their governments' efforts on the construction of nuclear weapons.
governments' efforts to build atomic bombs if Bohr or the other scientists could be persuaded that the German physicists would also refrain from this work. Unfortunately, he apparently did not formulate his proposal so clearly.

In any case, to Heisenberg's considerable consternation, Bohr replied that military research by physicists was unavoidable everywhere and therefore correct; he did not want to be drawn into a discussion of the German's proposal, apparently suspecting behind it an attempt to catch up with the dreaded American lead in nuclear fission; this consideration was due in very considerable part to the forced emigration of so many German physicists. The conversation produced a deep shock in Bohr and a conviction in him that Germany was already on the threshold of uranium bomb production." (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 106.)

The deep shock of the Danish half-Jewish Niels Bohr, who had now learned that the Germans could also produce atomic bombs, is very understandable, and he will have immediately informed his professional and political friends in America, led by Albert Einstein, and those in England, where Jewish scientists were also advancing nuclear research to develop the atomic bomb, of the bad news from Germany. This explains why in America, which entered the war on December 12, 1941, all non-military uranium research projects were stopped in the same month in order to concentrate all efforts on the production of an atomic bomb.

But our brilliant Professor Heisenberg, mentor to the German physicists, was considerably shocked and dismayed that the world's most esteemed scientist, Niels Bohr, thought so little of the morality of his German colleagues. Well, we are not too surprised at the behavior of those of our researchers who deliberately put their scientific interests above those of their people. We have encountered the same simplicity, not to say illusion or stupidity in political matters, among the conspirators who completely misjudged their so-called friends on the enemy side. Even during the war, their colleagues in other Allied countries were well informed about the current state of German research, while our researchers were not informed about the development of the atomic bomb in America and England. The American, English and French scientists certainly knew what they owed their country during

the war, something that various German nuclear physicists were unfortunately unable to claim.

By the end of 1940, according to Irving's report, Germany was already in a position to produce pul

of pulverized uranium metal at a rate of one ton per month, while American researchers had almost no uranium metal by the end of 1942. "When Fermi's reactor in Chicago made history, Degussa in Frankfurt had produced over seven and a half tons of uranium metal, 99 percent of which was available to German scientists. It was not the industry that let Germany down, it was its scientists." (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 84.)

During the war, Heisenberg and his ilk led our warfare to believe that they were working on the military use of uranium fission and demanded the means for this, such as raw materials, auxiliary materials, manpower and funds from the Minister of Economics and Armaments, manpower and funds that were taken away from the entire German war economy, and all this for the purpose of serving "pure" science. In truth, it was all just a pretense to avoid military service and to be able to continue working in their beloved profession, as if the millions of our sacrificing soldiers on the fronts had not also had their beloved professions!

After the war, Professor Werner Heisenberg proudly told Der Spiegel: "We never tried to produce atomic bombs and are glad that we did not have to take on this responsibility." ("Der Spiegel", 24/52.)

Heisenberg's foul play is clearly illustrated by the following incident:

"This time there could be no doubt," Irving reports, "Unquestionably more neutrons escaped from the surface of the pile than were sent in through the neutron source at its center, even when all other factors were taken into account. The Leipzig physicists calculated the total neutron increase to be around 13 percent. Döpel and Heisenberg reported to the Army Ordnance Office that they had finally succeeded in constructing a layer arrangement that produced more neutrons than it absorbed. 'The result achieved here is considerably more favorable than was to be expected according to the calculations from the experiments carried out with uranium oxide... The simple enlargement of the layer arrangement described here would therefore lead to a uranium burner from which energy of the order of magnitude of nuclear energy can be extracted.

The calculations were still only approximations, but if the pile could be enlarged to contain about five tons of heavy water and ten tons of cast uranium metal, the scientists would be able to build the world's first 'self-excited' pile, i.e. a pile with a 'chain reaction'. . .

The uranium burner LIV was still submerged in its water tank in Leipzig when Heisenberg traveled to Berlin on June 4 (1942, the author) for the most decisive secret meeting on the project: The scientists of the 'Uranium Association' were to appear before Reich Minister Speer and his highest officials so that the future of uranium research in Germany could be decided there. Two months earlier, Göring had signed a decree expressly banning all development programs that were

exclusively of significance for the post-war period. Speer alone could decide whether any project could be exempted from this.

The conference took place in the Helmholtz Auditorium of the Harnack House, the headquarters of the Kaiser Wilhelm Society in Berlin-Dahlem. Albert Speer was accompanied by Karl-Otto Saur, the head of the Technical Office in his ministry, and by Prof. Porsche, the Volkswagen designer. In addition to Heisenberg, the scientists included Otto Hahn, Dr. Diebner, Prof. Harteck, Dr. Wirtz and Prof. Thiessen, who had independently written a letter to Göring three months earlier about the significance of atomic fission. Dr. Albert Vogler, President of the Kaiser Wilhelm Society and Chairman of the Supervisory Board of Vereinigte Stahlwerke, also attended. We know from Otto Hahn's private diary that General Leeb, head of the Army Weapons Office, and his superior, Colonel General Fromm, Commander-in-Chief of the Reserve Army, were present, as well as Field Marshal Milch and Admiral General Wtzell, who roughly occupied Leeb's position in the other parts of the Wehrmacht.

After another scientist had given a presentation on a new mine probe, Heisenberg took the podium. It must be remembered that during the previous two months the Royal Air Force had begun extensive air raids against German cities and that Lübeck, Rostock and Cologne were already in ruins; Cologne had experienced the first attack by a thousand bombers a week earlier. As a result, Heisenberg immediately turned his attention to the military application of nuclear fission and explained how an atomic bomb could be made. This was new even for the officials of the Kaiser Wilhelm Society, who had previously only associated Heisenberg's research with the so-called 'uranium furnace'. Dr. Telschow, the secretary of the Society, later said that the word 'bomb' used at this conference was not only completely new to him, but also to many others present, as he could see from their reaction. Theoretically, there are two nuclear explosives, Heisenberg continued: uranium 235 and element 94 (plutonium). According to Bothe's calculations, it was known that protactinium could also be fissioned by fast neutrons and that supercritical masses of protactinium would also explode spontaneously by chain reaction, just like plutonium or uranium 235.
But protactinium could never be produced in sufficient quantities.

The exchange of questions and answers that remained most deeply rooted in the memories of all those present came at the end of Heisenberg's presentation. Field Marshal Milch asked how big a bomb would be that would be enough to destroy a large city. Heisenberg replied that the explosive charge would be about the size of a pineapple*, and he emphasized this answer by showing the size with his hands. This statement caused an uncomfortable stir among the non-physicists present. Heisenberg therefore hastened to dampen the enthusiasm, as he explained: even if the Americans, if they worked single-mindedly towards such a goal, could very soon have a uranium pile and a uranium bomb in two years at the earliest, the production of such a bomb in Germany was currently an economic impossibility. Such a bomb could not be produced within a few months anyway . . . In contrast, Heisenberg

emphasized the importance of the uranium reactor, both for Germany's military plans and for post-war development. Otto Hahn's diary shows that Speer approved the construction plans, which included a large air-raid shelter with special equipment to house the first large German uranium reactor, to be built on the site of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute of Physics in Berlin-Dahlem." (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 122ff.)

The nuclear researchers were allowed to continue working and were saved from being called up for military service.

What Irving has to say about Professor Walter Gerlach is equally characteristic of various nuclear researchers: "Professor Walter Gerlach was a man whose ways were mysterious, and there were few in the German Uranium Association who fully understood his motives. Above all, many did not understand why he allowed two research groups to compete with each other for the material needed to build uranium burners. Was it to create a healthy spirit of rivalry? Or was it to ensure that neither group received sufficient quantities of the scarce materials? Or was it to spare the greatest possible number of physicists from front-line service?....

As far as it was necessary to enforce his wishes, Gerlach also continued to talk about explosives*. When he was forced to withdraw the last surviving high-voltage particle accelerator, which had been built for other purposes, from a Dresden factory, he felt justified in emphasizing at a meeting in Berlin in October that this "high-voltage facility... is needed for explosive physics experiments
for which purposes no other facility is available'". (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 270 f.)

"In mid-December (1944, the author), Heisenberg, von Laue and several others who worked in Hechingen, Haigerloch and Teilfmgen were drafted into the Volkssturm, which was set up for a last stand. Prof. Gerlach wrote to Reichsleiter Bormann on December 16 to protest. Hadn't Bormann himself ordered all scientists to be released from special duties? Of course all his employees had volunteered for the Volkssturm, but now they had been assigned to units that were presumably to be deployed outside the immediate residential areas; and Bormann had expressly forbidden this.

Withdrawing even a small part of the personnel, who were limited to the most necessary, was tantamount to stopping the work that was being done there (wrote Gerlach, the author). However, this work is one of the most important research and development projects in my field. I must therefore ensure that this work continues undisturbed under all circumstances. You are no doubt aware that this is work which may unexpectedly become *of decisive importance for the war effort.* You are also aware that in America the greatest efforts are being made in the same field; but I am convinced that at present we still have a considerable lead over America in terms of both research and development, although we are working with a negligible percentage of the forces deployed in America.

Gerlach urged Martin Bormann to instruct the local party offices and especially Gauleiter Murr in Stuttgart that such Volkssturm units, which contained valuable

scientists, should not be used for special missions. Bormann did not reply, but Murr was certainly instructed to do as Gerlach had suggested." (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 265.)

News came from Stockholm about the American atomic bomb project. Uranium would serve as the material, and if the bound forces were released, explosive effects of previously unimagined power could be generated. This short report found its way into a small physics journal; "fortunately for Prof. Schumann and the other military research leaders, the publication does not seem to have attracted much attention. Like Prof. Esau, Schumann was terrified that his superiors might say something to Hitler about the atomic bomb and that the order would then come that such a bomb was to be built in six months. So it was better not to say a word.
say a word." (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 248 f.)

Professor Hahn had the same recklessness as Heisenberg, because even during the war he found nothing wrong with reporting publicly on his work. Thus it says in the superimposed dialog with Dr. Herbert Schräder of his memoirs:

"Question: .Can the facts that such articles were published shortly before the outbreak of war perhaps be taken as proof that the production of an atomic bomb was not initially thought of in Germany?1

Professor Hahn: 'I published everything we did. During the war I was once advised by official authorities to keep our work secret, but I didn't bother.1

Question: 'That refers to your own institute. But there were other research groups in Germany that were interested in exploiting nuclear energy.1

Professor: ‚There was a working group, led by Professor Heisenberg, that was doing experiments on the utilization of nuclear energy, but not with the aim of making bombs, but to possibly build a uranium burner - reactor we would say today.1

Question: Professor Heisenberg also made it clear in several publications after the war that no work had been done on an atomic bomb in Germany. Were there technical or humanitarian reasons for this?1

Professor Hahn: "Probably both. I would have refused to work on an atomic bomb under any circumstances. Many others would have done the same. But the technical prerequisites were certainly lacking in Germany at the time.1

Question: Was there no news about the work in the United States available to German researchers?1

Professor Hahn: 'There were no connections with them, not even via neutral foreign countries. Officially we learned nothing, but we suspected that work on the use of nuclear energy was also being done in America, because no more publications on the problem had appeared since the beginning of the war.1" (Otto Hahn, "Mein Leben", page 190f.)

Hermann Göring took a stand against the frivolous, frivolous way in which our scientists published their research results, which were to be kept secret, in a meeting held on July 6, 1942 with the Reich Research Council, which was under his

leadership in the Ministry of Aviation. At the end of the meeting, Göring returned to the subject of the German uranium project - a project "that is the most secret of secret things", in which

secret things", in which even the scientists had to submit to secrecy.

"The researcher has lived too long individually in this direction," he continued, and added with regard to the last months before the outbreak of war: "It can make you sick when you read that a congress on this or that physical or chemical matter was in New York or London, and you see with what urgency a researcher, as if he can no longer hold it in the bubble, now scattered his results. It was all wonderful, everyone knew about it. Only they, who would have been interested in making use of it, mostly didn't find out. First of all, they can't read the papers that these researchers published; at least I'm too stupid to do so. There are so many formulas swirling around that you can't find your way through them. As a result, those of us who were interested in these things usually learned nothing. On the other hand, our colleagues in England, France and America knew exactly what their colleagues in Germany had hatched."

There can be little doubt that Göring's joke was directed against Otto Hahn's publication of the discovery of nuclear fission in 1939. (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 13 lf.)

The following above statements by Professor Hahn did not correspond to the facts:

There was indeed a connection with America, namely through the Dane Niels Bohr, who was visited by Professor Heisenberg at the end of October 1941.

Nor is it true that Germany lacked the technical prerequisites for the production of an atomic bomb during the war. As already mentioned, Armaments Minister Speer would have provided many times what Heisenberg and his like-minded friends had requested.

Naturally, there were technical difficulties, as with any new discovery or invention that is to be used. One such difficulty was the great shortage of heavy water with the formula **D2O**, which was needed as a moderator (retarder) to achieve the chain reaction in nuclear fission, whereas the Reich Ministry of Economics was able to provide sufficient quantities of uranium from the mines in Joachimsthal in Czechoslovakia in the first year of the war.

When the war broke out, there was only one company producing heavy water as a by-product of hydrogen electrolysis at the Vemork plant near Rjukan in southern Norway. This plant had only produced 40 kilograms of heavy water from the start of operations at the end of 1934 until 1938 and

and only 10 kilograms per month until the end of 1939, which was nowhere near enough for the nuclear fission experiments.

For this reason, Professor Harteck wrote a letter to Heisenberg on January 15, 1940, in which he emphasized that he considered the production of heavy water to be just as important as that of uranium. He added: "According to my experience

with the High Command (of the Army: Army Weapons Office, the author), the production of the required quantities of E^O would certainly take years if we left it to this office. However, I could imagine that if I personally approached the relevant gentlemen in big industry, the time could be reduced to a fraction of that." (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 60.)

Professor Harteck's initiative led to the willingness of the Leuna works to make heavy hydrogen production possible. In the meantime, according to Irving's report, the German government had contacted Norsk Hydro in Vemork and arranged for a representative of I.G. Farben, which had a financial interest in the Norwegian company, to make representations concerning the supply of the entire stock of heavy water. The German assured him that his company would also receive a major order for heavy water. When asked by the Norwegians why the Germans needed the material, the German representative evaded a clear answer. In February 1940, the Norwegians expressed their regret at not being able to carry out the order.

In contrast, the French Physikergrappe under FredericJoliot had better luck with Norsk-Hydro. This group also needed the heavy water for an experiment with uranium decomposition. Professor Joliot asked the Minister of Munitions, Raoul Dautry, whether heavy water could be procured for his experiments and was informed that the entire supply of 185 kg in Rjukan would be sufficient for a decisive experiment.

Mr. Dautry sent Lieutenant Jacques Allier of the French secret service to Oslo with a person from the bank, which also owned a substantial share in Norsk-Hydro. Allier appealed to the conscience of the Norwegian director, Dr. Axel Aubert, and was so successful that the entire stock of heavy water was made available to France free of charge and preferential delivery from the following year's production was promised. After signing their agreement, Allier confided to the Norwegian the hoped-for result of the French research, whereupon the Norwegian Aubert asked his visitor to convey his good wishes to the French Prime Minister Daladier - "tell him that our company will not accept a centime for the production you will receive if it can contribute to France's victory".
can contribute to France's victory." (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 62 f.)

After the occupation of Norway in April 1940, the relationship with Norsk-Hydro changed. The company announced its intention to increase its heavy water production to 1.5 tons per year by expanding the Vemork electrolysis plant accordingly.

Professor Harteck urgently recommended that the second Norwegian electrolysis plant in Säheim should also be converted for the production of heavy water in order to produce a further ton per year.

By the end of 1941, production had increased more than tenfold to 140 kg per month, but this was still not enough to enable the nuclear physicists to carry out large-scale experiments, as Heisenberg calculated that five tons of heavy water were required to achieve the chain reaction in the uranium reactor. A large heavy water

plant was therefore planned in Germany using the Harteck-Sueß process, and I.G. Farben in Leuna was interested in building it. I.G. Farben was prepared to bear the entire cost of the plant on condition that Director H. Bütefisch of I.G. Farben and his closest colleagues from the Army Ordnance Office were informed in detail about the main features of the whole problem of this type of energy recovery.

This demand was discussed by Professor Esau, who had been appointed by the Ministry of Education as the new head of the atomic energy project, and those involved on April 30, 1942 in Berlin. Once this demand had been agreed upon, it was agreed that the test facility for the production of heavy water would be set up in Leuna as soon as possible.

"This was," in Irving's opinion, "the beginning of I.G. Farben's disastrous stranglehold, which damaged the uranium project in Germany; for when the heavy water crisis (at Norsk Hydro in Norway, the author) developed in 1944, the company refused to fulfill its obligations." (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 118f.)

This heavy water crisis was carried out by an act of sabotage by the British espionage and sabotage organization SOE (Special Operations Executive) with such success that heavy water production in Norway came to an almost complete standstill. British counterintelligence had been closely following the development of the German uranium supply since they had received the last reports about the increasing supply of heavy water to Germany in 1941. "The reliable reports were still coming through Scandinavia and reaching the desk of Corvette Captain Welsh, from whom they were forwarded to Michael Perrin in the London office of Tube Alloys; some of the best reports
came from a Berlin scientist whose name we have already encountered in this book." (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 137.)

"Tube Alloys" is the code name for the British atomic project, which was handled by the Office of Scientific and Industrial Research at 16 Old Queen Street. It was part of the joint task of Michael Perrin and Corvette Captain Welsh to lead the defense against German research.

The name of the aforementioned Berlin scientist is Dr. Paul Rosbaud, whom Irving describes on page 28 of his book as a "close friend of Prof. Hahn" and who, in order to be a well-informed agent for the British secret service, knew how to be on friendly terms with as many of the leading German nuclear physicists and physico-chemists as possible. This Dr. Rosbaud had already reported on the secret nuclear research conference of the Reich Ministry of Education held on 29 April 1939 to the English Professor R. S. Hutton from Cambridge, who visited Berlin shortly after the conference, and Hutton passed this news on to Dr. J. D. Cockeroft in England soon afterwards. It was also Dr. Rosbaud "who kept the Allies constantly informed about personalities from German science; Rosbaud retained the confidence of German scientists until the end of the war". (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 188.)

As the Soviet armies advanced further west in January 1945, Professor Gerlach

had to decide to stop work on the heavy water reactor in Berlin-Dahlem and move the rest of the institute to Hechingen in southern Germany. "The professor asked his good friend Dr. Rosbaud to join him and told him early on January 29 that he wanted to leave Berlin in the next day or two and take the 'heavy stuff' with him. Rosbaud asked if he meant that he wanted to take the heavy water to Heisenberg, who was already in southern Germany, and Gerlach did not deny this. When Rosbaud pressed him to say what Heisenb I erg wanted with the liquid, he only replied: 'Maybe business'...

Gerlach and Rosbaud discussed at length the danger that the heavy water could be destroyed. That same evening, Gerlach called Gauleiter Sauckel and told him about the planned transfer to Stadtilm; he arranged with Sauckel to visit him two days later.

In the late afternoon of January 31, Prof. Gerlach, Dr. Diebner in army uniform and Dr. Wirtz left the Harnack House in a car. Several trucks loaded with the heavy water, uranium and other equipment followed shortly afterwards Despite all his efforts, Rosbaud was unable to find out their final destination; he stayed behind in Berlin

and tried to inform the Englishmen Prof. Blackett and Dr. Cockeroft (of the British secret service, the author) through his secret Norwegian intermediaries that the uranium and heavy water had been taken out of Berlin; this news was followed by a request to Blackett to come as soon as possible after the capitulation and bring these precious materials to safety." (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 274f.)

On the night of February 27-28, 1943, the aforementioned sabotage attack on the Norsk-Hydro plant was carried out after the first sabotage operation under the cover name "Freshman" had failed. British nuclear researchers estimated the setback for German heavy water production at around two years. In addition to this serious loss, heavy water production at the Leuna plant of I.G. Farben, whose hydrogenation plant was completely destroyed by a bombing raid on July 28, 1944, was severely disrupted in the summer.

"On the same day, Speer's personal advisor, Dr. Goerner, had told Professor Gerlach that Leuna was 'completely over' as far as any plans for heavy water were concerned... The three scientists (Prof. Gerlach, Prof. Harteck and Dr. Diebner, the author) discussed the possibilities of heavy water production on an industrial scale with Bütefisch and Herold, the directors of Leunawerke, for the last time; but the attitude of I.G. Farben had hardened. Behind the scenes, there had been embarrassing disputes over the patent rights for the Harteck-Sueß process. Bütefisch voiced the wildest conjectures about the Allies' true reasons for bombing the Leuna plant.

The plant, which used the Harteck-Sueß process, had been completely destroyed in the air raid. .. . The LG. Farben was no longer interested in talking about industrial heavy water plants. Leuna had been bombed before, but had remained intact. This time it was different. Full of disbelief, Prof. Harteck heard Bütefisch speak of a 'gentleman's agreement' between heavy industry in Germany and heavy industry abroad, which was intended to ensure that the hydrogenation plants for which the Allied countries had made such considerable investments would not be destroyed; as the outraged Bütefisch explained, there could only be one reason why this agreement1 had now been so openly violated: The Allies had heard about the plans to build a heavy water plant in Leuna. This was a warning that he could not ignore. The plans would have to be abandoned.

The directors of LG. Farben seem to have heard vague rumors about the possibility of using nuclear fission for this purpose.

could be used." (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 247f.)

It is only too understandable that Professor Harteck could not believe in the "gentleman's agreement" of soft bue- tefish, because it would be absurd to assume that Germany or the Allies, who were in a war of to be or not to be against each other, could have shown consideration for the contracts of their major industries. Of course, the Allied enemy powers were also interested in destroying the Leunawerke hydrogenation plant and thus hitting Germany's armaments, which were suffering greatly from the lack of fuel.

Our heavy water bottleneck could no longer be closed. The Norsk-Hydro plant was not sufficiently secured and a replacement plant in Germany was not built in time. The production of an atomic bomb was not even attempted by our hypocritical nuclear researchers for the reasons outlined above. Only Professor Paul Harteck is described by Irving as the researcher "who, if he had been given the money, the manpower and the material, could certainly have built an atomic bomb for Germany". It must be added that Professor Harteck would have succeeded if he had been the sole decisive leader of the entire uranium project, unencumbered and undisturbed by weak-minded people like von Weizsäcker, Heisenberg, Hahn and Wirtz, sufficiently protected from a traitor and saboteur like Dr. Rosbaud, who betrayed everything to the enemy.

But none of this is surprising when you consider that the nuclear research clique was infected by the spirit of conspiracy. The physicist von Weizsäcker was the son of the active conspirator Ernst von Weizsäcker. The son of Max Planck, "involved in the events of July 20, 1944, had been arrested and sentenced to death". (Otto Hahn, "My Life", page 211.)

And we also learn from Otto Hahn that he and his friends were deeply shaken "by the fate of the Bonhoeffer family in connection with July 20, 1944". (Otto Hahn, "My Life", page 196.)

According to this, the physico-chemist Karl-Friedrich Bonhoeffer came from this family. At the beginning of 1940, he attended a meeting with Heisenberg and Dr. Karl Wirtz at Dr. Diebner's Berlin office, where they discussed the production of heavy water in Germany. After this meeting, Heisenberg wrote to Harteck on January 18 (1940, author's note) that the construction of the industrial plant should be "left to physico-chemists who really understand the subject". Heisenberg advised Harteck to correspond with Bonhoeffer about this. (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 60f.)

The relative of the physico-chemist Karl-Friedrich Bonhoeffer was the Protestant theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was a member of the conspiracy and was executed for treasonous conspiracies on April 9, 1945.

Just as Heisenberg spoke to Der Spiegel after the war about the real work of nuclear researchers, Otto Hahn did the same in his acceptance speech in Stockholm on December 10, 1945, after he had been awarded the Nobel Prize for the first time. In it he said, among other things: "And that science did not come to a standstill in

Germany even during the war will probably be shown by the collection of monographs currently being prepared for publication in Germany at the suggestion of the Allies, even if many of the works are under the motto '*important for the war' or even 'decisive for the war'*. Thousands of young Germans have thus been preserved for research. Thousands have been carried over into the new era... In reality, we also carried out our work during the war and brought it to publication. We are glad about that...

But not everyone was able to do this. Not many people outside Germany are really aware of the pressure under which most of them have lived during the last ten or twelve years; and I may say once again how many of my German colleagues have endeavored, despite all external obstacles, to continue pure scientific research as far as possible during the war." (Otto Hahn, "My Life", page 209f.)

After the war, leading German researchers were allowed to speak with a proud gesture, after they had behaved like deserters during the war by taking refuge in the pretense of research and development work that was important or even decisive for the war in order to avoid military service at the front. This was also blatant sabotage of the German war effort and betrayal of the German people, who had to fight a terrible battle for their right to live because they had once again become too strong politically and economically for the enemy powers.

"When Göring appointed a physicist to head the German project," writes Irving, "it was clear that the project would come to nothing. Gerlach had seen his appointment as a golden opportunity to regain German supremacy in the field of pure science, even in the midst of war.

An early analysis of German military research by the Allies declared as early as 1945:

German science was not without guile and took advantage of the lack of understanding of science among leaders to engage in interesting scientific research under the guise of war work that could not possibly help the war
could not possibly help the war effort. In short, the behavior of German scientific leaders proved that science could not be left to the scientists during the war

In Germany, Heisenberg was the undisputed doyen of physicists, and Heisenberg was a theorist. He probably would have stepped aside during wartime and let the experimental physicists take a larger share of the lead in the endeavor if the physicists around him had not advised him against it - especially von Weizsäcker and W1rtz, who despised the achievements of all scientists who were not like them. (Wirtz had worked on the main patent for the uranium machine.) But the theoretical physicists were the most distant from industrial engineering and technology; this regrettable gap between science and industry had deprived German science of great engineering achievements such as the cyclotron (as a preliminary stage for the uranium pile, author's note) in 1940.

Due to the hegemony of theoretical science in Germany, there was no immediate urgency for the uranium pile to become critical (that is, to lead to the chain reaction as a prerequisite for an atomic bomb, author's note); Heisenberg's group was more

interested in building up the solid theoretical foundations step by step and comparing them with the practical results they then obtained. Academically, this is a very satisfying approach, but it doesn't win a war. .

Only when the German scientists heard the news of the atomic bomb on August 6, 1945, did they realize that they had also lost the war of physics. . .

Gerlach himself, in particular, was reproached for abandoning Germany in its hour of need: he could have forced the scientists to produce an atomic bomb, but he had not...

The Americans, on the other hand, had thrown themselves wholeheartedly into the project even before Fermi's pile in Chicago became critical in December 1942, and had invested a thousand times more effort in their 'Manhattan Project'. After mid-1942, Germany stood still until the end of the war. In those three years, knowledge was gained that could have been achieved in as many months if they had had the will to do so." (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 306 ff.)

The head of the uranium project appointed by Göring enjoyed particularly close relations with Dr. Albert Vogler, President of the Kaiser-Wlhe : lm-Gesellschaft and Chairman of the Supervisory Board of the Vereinigte Stahlwerke, as well as with Armaments Minister Speer.

There would have been no lack of prerequisites for the production of a bomb if our leading nuclear physicists and physico-chemists had actually wanted to produce one. If they had been determined to do so, heavy water production in Germany would certainly have been made possible in time so that we would not have had to rely solely on the only Norwegian hydro plant.

Our rocket researchers Professor von Braun and Dr. Dornberger were also devoted to their science, but despite all the adversities (their Peenemünde test facility was almost completely destroyed by bombs) they created the V-weapon, which was still in use. They were responsible German men who knew what they owed their fatherland.

An atomic bomb in the hands of German warfare could have served as a means of keeping the enemy superiority in check, as has become the practice today between the two superpowers America and Soviet Russia. But this is not the point here. If our leading nuclear physicists had at least had the will to produce an atomic bomb, like their colleagues on the enemy side, they would not be burdened today with the shame of being rightly denounced for sabotaging the development of an atomic bomb for their country's war effort.

Towards the end of the war, the American, British, French and Russian fighter squads followed hot on the heels of the fighting Allied troops in order to capture the German scientists and place them in their service as quickly as possible.

In Otto Hahn's memoirs "My Life" we read: "Colonel Pash (leader of the American command, the author) informed us that our future had not yet been decided. But it depended on our sincerity and good will whether we would be treated 'as internationally recognized scientists' or 'as Germans'." (Otto Hahn, "My

Life", page 170.)

Now there cannot be the slightest doubt that our interviewed nuclear researchers presented themselves "as internationally recognized scientists" and did not lack sincerity and goodwill. The last thing they were still hiding was given to the enemy, as Irving reports: "When the group was about to leave Hechingen, von Weizsäcker suddenly blurted out that the remaining reports of the German research program were in a sealed canister in the abortion pit of his apartment. The hiding place was tracked down and the unappetizing task of investigating the find was assigned to Dr. Goudsmit (head of the mission of the Allied defence and intelligence services in liberated Europe, the author). Now the picture of
German uranium research was now truly complete, for the Abwehr mission now possessed the full set of secret research reports, and with Gerlach's files they provided the story of the entire endeavor." (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 293.)

Otto Hahn recounts in his memoirs how generously their behavior was rewarded:

"Our group arrived in the evening in undestroyed Heidelberg, and we prisoners were well accommodated on Philosophenweg in a beautiful, vacant villa." . .

The idyll in Heidelberg did not last long. On May 6, 1945, we moved on. We drove in three cars via Metz, Verdun, Gravelotte and other theaters of war to Reims. We made a written declaration that we would not attempt to escape and were treated well. . .

On May 7, we went by plane via Paris to Versailles. . On May 9 we were joined by Mr. Heisenberg and Mr. Diebner, and two days later we were taken by jeep to an uninhabited villa near Le Vesinkt in the Seine-et-Oise department. ...

Here our group grew to include Mr. Harteck and Mr. Gerlach, so that we were now ten people in all, captured 'for the pleasure of His Majesty'. The treatment was good in every respect, as was the food, but the armed guards constantly made our situation clear to us. Two German prisoners of war acted as waiter and cook.

The next change of accommodation* came at the beginning of June. We went from France to Belgium. Our destination was the small town of Huy in the Ardennes, where we were billeted in the Fecqueval hunting lodge. . .

On July 3rd we were taken by plane via Liège, Ostend and Harwich to the English coast and from there by car to the vicinity of Cambridge. We were each given a room in a beautiful country house with a large garden in Godmanchester near Huntington... Our life in England could be described as luxurious without exaggeration. Breakfast consisted of cornflakes or porridge, ham and egg, jam, toast and butter. At lunchtime and in the evening we had rum steaks or other roasts and very often chips. No wonder we all put on weight rapidly. Five German prisoners of war were assigned to us here, including a very good cook. Within the house and the very large garden, these prisoners were just as free as we were. There was a good library for entertainment and education. In addition to the radio, we often listened to Beethoven's sonatas performed by Heisenberg on a piano. In the afternoons, Major Rittner sometimes read a few chapters from Dickens' novels so that we could

improve our English. After dinner, most of us continued to play bridge or skat over beer, which was available to us in any quantity.
continued to play bridge or skat." (Otto Hahn, "Mein Leben", page 170 ff.)

This is how wonderful it was for our Kemforscher "as internationally recognized scientists" - not "as Germans" - in brief English captivity, while tens of thousands of German front-line soldiers were killed or starved to death in the prison camps of the enemy powers.

Some of the German scientists captured by the Russians helped quite diligently in the development of the Soviet atomic bomb. Irving mentions Professor Nikolaus Riehl, who now teaches at the Technical University of Munich, in the first place. "In 1949 he was still in the USSR. He received the Stalin Prize first class, the Order of Lenin and was named a 'Hero of Socialist Labor' for the work he did in Russia. For the next three years he was scientific director of a Soviet institute that conducted secret research into the chemistry of radioactive fission products and sought antidotes to radiation damage. In 1953, he, Gustav Hertz, Manfred von Ardenne and Prof. H. Pose were transferred to the institute in Sukhumi, where they worked on non-secret projects until their return to Germany in April 1955. Apart from Riehl, they all accepted tempting offers to work in the Soviet zone, while Riehl went to Munich." (David Irving, "The Dream of the German Atomic Bomb", page 299.)

We must be grateful to the English writer David Irving for giving us an exhaustive insight into the work of our nuclear researchers during the war through his publication, grateful also for highlighting the President of the Kaiser Wilhelm Society, Dr. Albert Vogler, as "morally one of the outstanding characters in Germany", for whom military sabotage would have been unthinkable.